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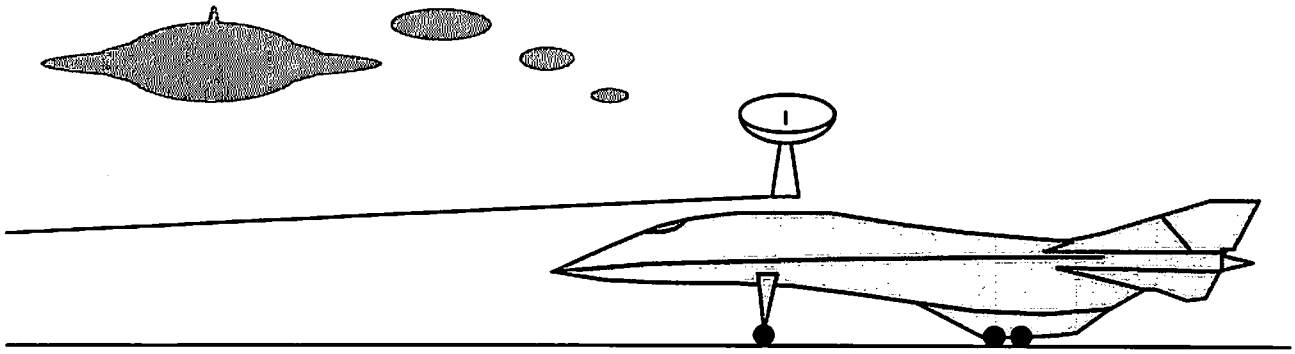
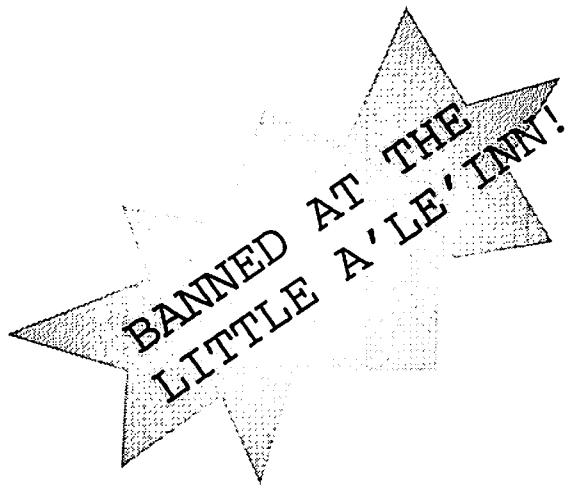
"Area 51" Viewer's Guide

By Glenn Campbell

With Contributions by Tom Mahood



- ⇒ Mile-by-Mile Logs of Nevada 375, America's "Alien Highway"
- ⇒ Secret Base Viewing Sites
- ⇒ Area Attractions and Back Road Info
- ⇒ Annotated Reference List
- ⇒ Map Portfolio
- ⇒ Express Guide to Las Vegas
- ⇒ Comedy, Tragedy, Pathos and Drama



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"For all it's flippancy and deliberate epistemological murkiness, the Viewer's Guide is a work of real transformative power. Campbell seizes on the extravagant security measures intended to conceal Groom Lake and effectively turns them into a spotlight on the facility."

—Secrecy & Government Bulletin, Aug./Sept. 1993

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Area 51 on the Internet

For current information on Area 51, see the World Wide Web page at...

http://www.cris.com/~psyspy/area51

(or http://www.infi.net/~psyspy/area51when above is not working)

For information on our free on-line newsletter, *The Groom Lake Desert Rat*, send an email message to **area51rc@aol.com**.

Area 51 on the Internet

A catalog of documents and products from the Area 51 Research Center is available free via email, WWW or regular mail.

You're On Your Own!

While every effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the information herein, the author accepts no liability whatsoever for any damages or injury that may result if any information is in error. We have tried to provide the best information we can, but it may be subject to change. The reader must exercise his own judgment as to where he should and should not go.

About This Document

In UFO research, it can be hard to distill the truth from the overwhelming ocean of rumors, ideologies, hyperbole, hoaxes and false perceptions. All of these things are rampant here, so I have chosen in this document to stay as close as possible to concrete, undeniable fact. This is a guide not to UFOs themselves but to the many practical matters concerning the hunt for aerial objects in the vicinity of the "Black Mailbox," the remote highway location north of Las Vegas where many visitors claims to have seen UFOs. This document reviews the geography of the region, the references available, local accommodations and services and many other practical topics of interest to visitors. Much of this information should be helpful to any traveler passing through the area regardless of their views on flying saucers. It should also be of interest to aviation enthusiasts in search of secret "Black Budget" aircraft built entirely by humans.

This book is an anomaly. It is a guide to hunting for UFOs and secret aircraft, but I do not honestly believe you are going to see any. In over two years living in this area, I have never seen any light in the sky I cannot explain or any military device that I would regard as particularly secret. There are a few intelligent UFO stories emanating from the military area that I think deserve serious attention. These concern the claim that the U.S. government may have had extraterrestrial hardware in its possession and may even have been in contact with aliens themselves. That is different from the claim—fostered by the less reputable media and by a certain local merchant—that you can come here to this remote desert highway and see flying saucers in on demand. This is ridiculous. The "Alien Highway" is a myth that, regrettably, I helped create by drawing attention to this area. It serves the human need for rituals and things to buy, but it does not bring us any closer to the truth.

This document reflects a certain period in my investigation of Area 51, ending around Dec. 1993, when I was collecting a general base of geographical knowledge about the area. I continue to update this *Viewer's Guide* on an irregular basis to reflect changes in the facts initially reported, but I will not pursue any new avenues of investigation here. Active investigation of Area 51 is reported in our newsletter, *The Groom Lake Desert Rat*, available free by internet email or by mail subscription for a fee. To keep the background knowledge up to date, I encourage readers to send me their corrections and suggestions for future editions. I am concerned about the accuracy of details, and minor corrections are welcomed as much as major ones. (I apologize for the typographical errors; please tell me about any you find.) I want to thank the many people who have already contributed their advice and intelligence to this project. Their clues have lead me to a lot of interesting material I would have never discovered otherwise.

I have assembled this guide as a not-for-profit project at considerable personal expense. To help me recoup some of my costs, would you kindly not photocopy it but instead purchase additional copies. [Ordering instructions are in the back.] Authorized copies have a copy number written in pen on the front cover.

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"When you have eliminated the impossible, what remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

— Sherlock Holmes

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Warning!

Freedom Ridge and White Sides are now closed!

As of April 10, 1995, the popular near-in viewpoints overlooking the Groom Lake base were closed to the public. You can no longer see the base from any legal vantage point west of Highway 375. **The old hiking trail to Freedom Ridge, described in previous versions of this *Viewer's Guide*, now crosses the border without any posted warning signs. Do not attempt this trail.**

The Groom Lake base can still be seen from a more distant mountaintop to the west, Tikaboo Peak, described in this guide. The hike is challenging, however, and is not for everyone.

Other important advice....

Do not cross the border.

Many visitors have driven past the signs that clearly say "Restricted Area" or "No Trespassing." **If you cross the border, you will be arrested**! The usual fine is $600, with no leniency given for ignorance. The border is marked by clear signs wherever a road crosses it, but often no fence or gate. **Elsewhere in the desert, the border is usually marked only by <u>orange posts</u> spaced about every 200 feet.** Do not pass them! **Do not hike near the border after dark because the orange posts become impossible to see.** As long as you stay outside the border, you have a right to travel and camp anywhere on adjoining public lands.

All "Restricted Area" signs in this vicinity are correctly placed. None can be ignored.

Do not drive on rougher roads than your car can handle.

Many naive visitors driving standard cars have found themselves stranded on rugged dirt roads that are passable only by four wheel drive vehicles. *Maintained* (bladed) dirt roads are generally safe for all vehicles, but stay off *unmaintained* ("two track") roads unless you are certain your vehicle is up to it. The danger is getting stuck in sand or hung-up on rocks. If you drive on any dirt road, you should bring all the water, warm clothing and other supplies you may need to hike back to the pavement should you break down.

Be prepared for desert extremes.

This area, at an elevation of 5000 feet, can be bitterly cold in the winter and at night, and high winds are common. Many people come here thinking deserts are always hot and have been ill-prepared for the elements. If you choose to leave the maintained roads, remember that this is a remote area with little hope of rescue should you get into trouble away from the paved highway. In the summer, sunburn is a danger, and running out of water on a hike can be deadly. (You need at least one quart for every hour or mile on a hike.)

Don't say we didn't warn you!

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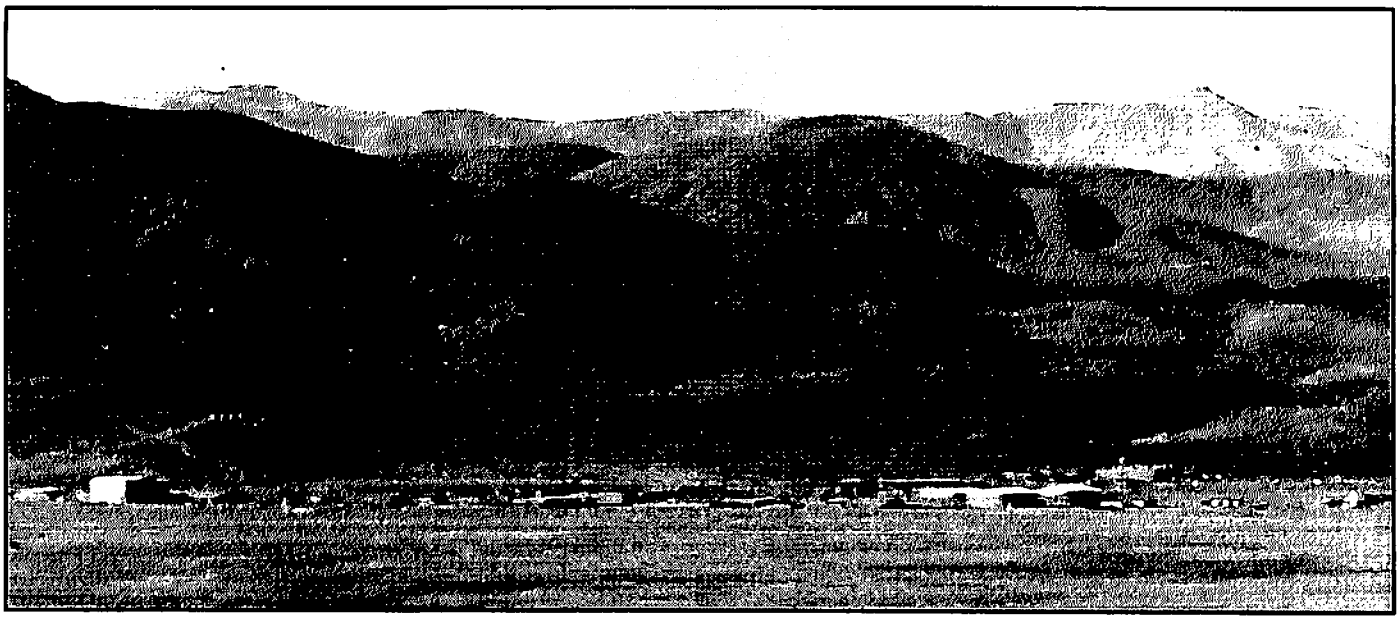

Groom Lake Base from Freedom Ridge.

Commonly Asked Questions

Flying Saucers, Secret Aircraft and Other Uncertainties

What is the "Black Mailbox" and why is it famous?

The Black Mailbox marks a location on Nevada Highway 375 where many visitors—but few locals—claim to have seen UFOs. It gained its first publicity in late 1989 when a physicist[1], Bob Lazar, came forward on a Las Vegas TV station with the claim that he had worked at a secret "flying saucer base" over the mountains from here. There have long been rumors of alien craft at the Nevada Test Site and adjoining Nellis Range, but Lazar was the first to make specific first-hand public claims. He says that the U.S. military had in its possession at least nine alien-built flying saucers—but no live aliens he knew of—and was studying the craft with the goal of reproducing the technology. Lazar says he worked at this base for several months in late 1988 and early 1989, read briefing documents on human-alien contact and had hands-on technical experience with one of the craft. His story has been impossible to confirm but also curiously difficult to refute. If it is a hoax, it is coherent and well crafted and includes many plausible technical details. The alleged location was a good one—an off-limits area near Papoose Dry Lake—and no government agency seems willing to directly deny his claims. Even people who believe Lazar find it hard to make sense of it all. Where did the saucers come from? Why hasn't the public been told about them? There is no consensus on these questions, and one person's theory seems as good as anyone else's.

Whatever you think about Lazar and his truthfulness, his story is consistent and disciplined enough for investigators to draw logical conclusions about how to proceed. If the government did have alien hardware in its possession, Area 51 or nearby areas in the Nellis Air Force Range or Nevada Test Site would be the logical place to keep them. Secrecy and security are impressive here, and no one who knows what is really going on is talking. In the end, the Lazar story may prove to be no more real than the *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Nonetheless, the setting is real, just like Baker Street, and there is an intellectual challenge in following the clues. Although the debate concerns extraterrestrials, Area 51 is a human mystery—a test of what we can believe from human witnesses and how much we can trust our government.

The Black Mailbox is simply a rancher's mailbox located at mile marker LN 29.5 on Nevada State Highway 375. This location is about 130 road miles north of Las Vegas and 20 miles southeast of the small settlement of Rachel, Nevada. This stretch of sagebrush is significant because it is the closest that an average civilian can come to the highly restricted military testing area where Lazar claims the flying saucers are kept. Since his claims were first publicized, many people have come here looking for flying saucers and think they have seen them. "Area 51" has been featured in hundreds of articles and TV shows and is now America's

[1] Lazar claims to be a physicist and seems to have a physicist's knowledge and skills, but his credentials cannot be verified.

most popular secret base. The area attracts occasional tours, conferences, believers, charlatans and curiosity seekers, not to mention a steady a stream of urban pilgrims in search of enlightenment. For the most part, however, the area remains as it always was, a vast and lonely desert where even a million sky watchers could easily find solitude.

Will I see flying saucers here?

Lazar himself thinks the UFO watchers are "nuts" and has never claimed that you can see flying saucers from Highway 375. It is important to separate the claim of government-sponsored UFO research from the suggestion that you can see now flying saucers from the highway "on demand." If the Lazar story is true, Highway 375 could be a better place to see flying saucers than, say, Hoboken or Des Moines but that isn't saying much. If the saucers are real, the government will certainly be cautious about putting them on display, especially after all the massive publicity. I lived in Rachel full time for over two years—from Jan. 1993 through April 1995. I have spent countless days and nights in the desert and have seen a lot of spectacular lights associated with military exercises, but I have never seen any object in the sky that I did not have a prosaic explanation for. At the same, many UFO minded tourists have come to the area for only one night and seen UFOs everywhere. Maybe some people have seen real flying saucers here, but the reality is difficult to distill amid all the social noise. The truth is obscured not by government disinformation but by the vast mire of poor-quality observations and unsupported speculations publicized as fact by UFO believers.

Most of the "UFOs" people claim to see in this area are almost certainly misperceptions of conventional military activity—mostly flares of various kinds and aircraft lights seen under unusual conditions. As the nation's premiere air combat exercise area and an important weapons testing facility, the Nellis Air Force Range can offer many bizarre shows that involve no shred of alien technology. There are many military operations taking place here that most civilians have never seen before, and it takes some skepticism and patience to figure out what could be alien and what is not.

If you are unlikely to see flying saucers here, what is the point in coming?

Good question. This area is interesting at least for its stark emptiness and as an anthropological phenomenon. Like the Las Vegas gambling mecca to the south, the UFO hysteria in Rachel is an illustration of how people think—that is, not very rationally. It also shows how they respond to the unknown—by imposing a set of myths and rituals on it similar to how primitive humans explained the movement of sun and stars. The most popular ritual here is to sit beside the highway at night to look for UFOs in the sky. There is no reason to feel ashamed about participating in this local custom. On a clear night when there is no moon, the sky is alive with stars and celestial activity that you never see in the city. With a classified military base just over the mountains, a glimpse of a secret aircraft is always possible, but don't get your hopes up. The management of the secret base knows as well as you do that Highway 375 is a UFO tourist mecca. They read this *Viewer's Guide* and can probably adjust their flight patterns to avoid detection.

Nonetheless, a saucer watching expedition has a certain nostalgic appeal, and nothing can be more pleasant in the summer than setting up a lawn chair under the crystal clear desert skies, miles from anywhere, with the dream of seeing something out of the ordinary.

Where are the flying saucers supposedly kept?

According to Lazar, the nine saucers he saw were stored in camouflaged hangers near Papoose Lake, south of Groom Lake. This remote location, referred to by Lazar as "Area S-4"[2] is walled off by mountains and is buffered on the south and east by bombing ranges, on the west by the Nevada Test Site and on the north by the high security military base at Groom Lake. There are mountains far to the south where you can legally view the dry lake bed, but the distance is long: 35 to 45 miles.[3] Only the airspace over Papoose can be seen from the "Alien Highway."

Could the saucers have been moved from S-4 since the publicity began?

That seems plausible. If the original stories were true, then the secrecy of the Papoose Lake site has been seriously compromised, and Lazar's disclosures could have provided sufficient motivation to move the operation elsewhere. The current whereabouts of Lazar's saucers is a matter of endless speculation among UFO enthusiasts, but the fact remains, if the saucers were ever here, you cannot destroy the *history* of such a place. The memories of workers and physical traces of any supply and support mechanism cannot be

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[2] A designation that was confirmed to me by a former Groom Lake worker.

[3] See Mt. Stirling section in the appendix.

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completely erased, and they should yield eventually to the anti-secrecy movement empowered by the end of the Cold War.

Sightings here do continue, but since there has never been any credible effort to analyze them and weed out the good ones from the misperceptions, it is hard to know whether there has been any real change. If the saucers were once real but were later moved, then you can rest assured that due to the rich array of conventional phenomena and the power of suggestion, people would still continue to see UFOs here.

Is the Black Mailbox the best place to set up watch?

The Black Mailbox seems a product of human folklore, not a rational geographic choice. Due to the media attention devoted to it, the Mailbox is the place where most first-time watchers and curiosity-seekers seem to go, but this is an arbitrary location chosen because it is the only roadside landmark in the vicinity. The gravel area at mile marker 32.3 is a more discreet and comfortable parking spot than the mailbox, and, because it is slightly higher and closer to Papoose Lake, it is also theoretically a better viewing location. There are countless other places you can watch from, including off-highway locations that more interesting.

When is the best time to look for flying saucers?

Religious tenet among watchers says that flying saucers are tested here on Wednesday nights. The day was first mentioned by Lazar. It seems unlikely that aliens would have any special respect for Wednesdays, but keep in mind that these craft are supposed to be operated by humans under a military bureaucracy. Lazar has said that Wednesday nights were chosen because studies indicated this was the time of least traffic "in the area," which presumably means along Highway 375. That conclusion is certainly not valid today, since Wednesday is the night when true believers are most likely to show up on the highway. A theory circulating among aviation watchers—those looking for secret aircraft, not UFOs—says that Wednesday is consistent with the pattern of some other military testing programs: In a five day work week, Wednesday is the logical time for a major event because it allows preparations before and debriefings after the test without the interruption of a weekend.

Lazar says he has had no information on the program since he left it in Spring of 1989, but when he was there, there was no testing conducted on weekends when the Papoose base was essentially shut down and only a skeleton staff remained. The same weekend lull holds today at the secret Groom Lake base next door and for most of the other operations in the Nellis Range. On the other hand, things could have changed since Lazar's time, and the absence of routine military activity on the weekends might make this an ideal time for flying saucer testing. Like everything else, it's all speculation.

Lazar also says that the saucers were never flown in any kind inclement weather, due to the military's high degree of caution and their worry about damaging the craft. This is a convenient claim that watchers have no reason to challenge, since most would rather not be outside in bad weather anyway.

The best time of day to watch is, again, speculative. Top secret aircraft like the Stealth fighter and bomber have been tested at night to keep anyone from getting a good look at them or taking a clear photo, and the same logic might apply to flying saucers. As a practical matter for watchers, it is easier to spot a distant aircraft at night than in the day, assuming that it gives off light. The reports of Lazar and others suggest that the production of light is an inherent characteristic of flying saucer propulsion. You might be able to see more details of the craft during the day, but then you have no obvious beacon to tell you where to look.

Conventional wisdom contends that some sort of display, known among watchers as "Old Faithful," shows up reliably around 4:50 am every Thursday morning. In fact, it shows up every weekday morning. This time happens to coincide with the first daily Boeing 737 jet bringing workers from Las Vegas to Groom Lake. The flight approaches from the south with bright landing lights on, often moving directly toward the watchers at the Black Mailbox so that it seems to be "hovering" in the air without moving. Some noisy UFO watchers who have staked their reputations on "Old Faithful" insist the light they see is a UFO that *turns into* a 737 just before landing, so you'll have to judge for yourself.

What is the best time of year to look for flying saucers?

According to the advice of the other saucer watchers you meet here, the most active period for flying saucers seems to be every season of the year except the time you happen to come. If you arrive in the summer, the wags will tell you that the saucer base is all but shut down and that the best time for viewing is September through May. Come back in January, and they will tell you the best time is July. This seasonal shift of opinion appears to be a convenient way to keep the faith when long nights go by and nothing unusual happens. The unpleasant fact, for anyone who is not a true believer, is that you can spend a lot of nights here, at any

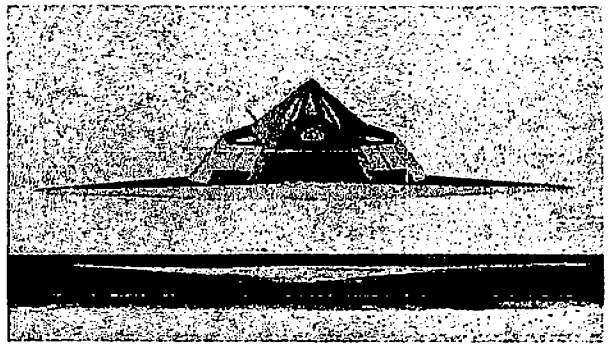
time of year, and not see anything unworldly. The greatest number of "saucers" tend to appear on your first night of watching, when you are inexperienced in identifying other phenomena. As you learn more about conventional military hardware, optical illusions and celestial phenomena, fewer and fewer "UFOs" will present themselves, until you might wonder if watching is worth the effort.

If you do not see any flying saucers, some encouragement can be drawn from the fact that you also are not seeing much of the rumored "Black Budget" aircraft that are almost certainly being tested at Groom Lake. Groom Lake is a facility even closer to the Black Mailbox than Papoose Lake, so activity there ought to be easy to detect; nonetheless, if you were here a decade ago, you would have had great difficulty catching a glimpse of the F-117A Stealth fighter, a secret aircraft that definitely existed and definitely were flown regularly from Groom long before it was announced. Groom Lake is a very large facility that the government does not officially acknowledge with apparently the longest runway in the world: *Something* secret must be tested there.

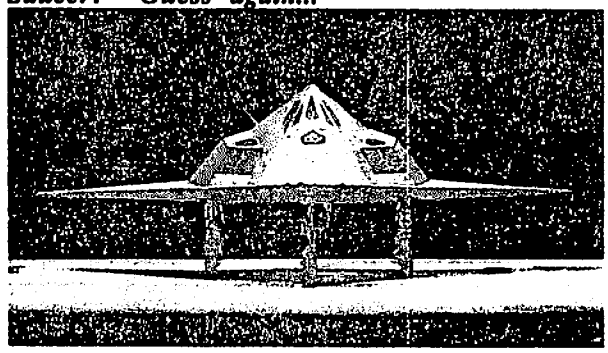
Over the years, the Air Force has developed great proficiency in keeping experimental craft secret. These folks aren't dumb! If they are trying to keep something out of the public eye, then it follows that you will have difficulty seeing it. On the other hand, if they are testing a secret craft, be it a "conventional" Black Budget plane or something more exotic, then they have to fly it. The time of year is not relevant, especially in Nevada, which has been chosen for its excellent year-round flying conditions. If military officials expect something to fly in the future, then they have to fly it now, on a regular basis. Only then can they be sure that all hardware systems and pilot proficiencies will be functional when they need them.

How will I recognize a flying saucer when I see one?

It is surely more difficult than it seems. First of all, you have to have a good understanding of conventional military devices and what they are capable of. There are aviation experts, believers in UFOs for other reasons, who have spent many nights here and not seen anything inexplicable, even when the UFO buffs on nearby hills are seeing saucers galore.[4] The difference, presumably, is that the experts know how to identify the conventional hardware that novices immediately assume are alien craft.



Saucer? Guess again...



Stealth fighter, front view.

A true "Lazar-type" flying saucer, if there is one, would be an object that could change direction abruptly, travel vertically as easily as horizontally, move from place to place without any apparent intervening motion, stop on a dime, take off again at high speed and vanish from view in mid-air. The most common report is of a bright object, lighted from its skin, that appears to jump from one point to another in the sky almost instantaneously. However, one should keep in mind that natural oscillations of the eye (or of a hand-held video camera) can also generate this apparent movement in an isolated light. In the day, the craft appears metallic and saucer shaped, typically with bulges at the top and bottom. The image of the craft is often described as indistinct, as though surrounded by a layer of ionized air.

Few watchers in this area claim to have seen a defined saucer, only unusual nighttime lights. Even if you did see a saucer-like craft, the shape alone would not necessarily confirm an alien device because certain conventional aircraft may also appear as a circular form. For example, the Stealth fighter appears as a saucer when seen head-on, while the dual landing lights of an airliner or the high beams of a car can also merge into a blinding, disc-like shape at a distance.

What is Groom Lake?

Groom Lake, the dry lake bed just north of Papoose Lake, is the site of a testing facility for conventional, "merely" Top Secret aircraft. While the existence of a facility at Papoose Lake had not been proven, the base at Groom Lake definitely exists, even though officially nameless. The Stealth fighter and bomber[5] were put

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[4]See Groom Lake cover story in *Popular Science*, March 1994 issue, page 57.

[5]The B-2 has visited here regularly after its roll-out at Palmdale. Half-size prototypes were rumored to have flown at Groom earlier.

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through their paces from this airfield, and today the testing subjects are said to be new stealth aircraft, unmanned reconnaissance drones and possibly, if you have enough faith, the fastest plane in the world.

Of particular interest to aviation fans is a rumored Mach 5 to Mach 8 spy plane dubbed *Aurora*.[6] Like the Stealth before it, this plane—if it exists—is shrouded in deep secrecy. Catching a glimpse of and trying to photograph such an advanced plane is a challenge which draws aviation fans to the area who do not expect to see flying saucers. Pinning down the Aurora is almost as difficult as finding the truth about UFOs: While there seems to be a lot of evidence, it is mostly circumstantial and does not preclude other hypotheses. Although few claim to have seen this plane, many say they have sensed its presence. Aurora is supposed to have an unusual sound: a very loud, deep, throbbing roar unlike any other aircraft. This aircraft appears to be based on known aerodynamic and engineering principals without any alien technology, and to the untrained observer, it would probably look not much different from any other plane. Unlike other secret aircraft and UFOs, which the military simply did not talk about, stories of a secret hypersonic aircraft have been rigorously denied by the military at a very high level. Recent news story suggest that there was such a program, but it never met its goals, and it was canceled in the early 1990s.

Because it is a very secure area, Groom Lake could also conceivably be used for the testing of "Above Top Secret" alien craft, but this seems unlikely given the base's relative openness. Groom Lake is not the place where Lazar claims the saucers are stored. Saucer watchers seem to focus their attention on Groom mainly because it is fairly accessible while Papoose Lake and other areas of the Restricted Zone are not. Occupying an area larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined, the Nellis Range and adjoining Nevada Test Site offer plenty of nooks and crannies to hide your saucers, well out of sight of the tourists on the highway.

The Groom Lake base lies within the geographical sector of the Nevada Test Site once known as "Area 51," based on the numbering system on early Nevada Test Site maps. It is a box 6 miles by 10 miles in size adjoining the northeast corner of the Nevada Test Site. At the center of Area 51 is the air base, consisting of hundreds of buildings and two very long runways. Military pilots refer to the restricted airspace around Groom Lake as "Dreamland" or "The Box." This airspace encompasses all of Groom Lake and the northern half Papoose Lake. Workers on the ground have referred to the Groom base as "51," "Watertown," "The Ranch," "DET 1" and a number of other names. Outside the line, "Area 51" now seems to have almost as many definitions as "Watergate" or "New Age." Used in the vernacular by UFO buffs, it refers both to the entire military Restricted Zone and to the alleged government cover-up of alien craft hidden anywhere in Nevada.

Are there any mountains I can legally climb to look down on Groom Lake?

The most popular viewpoints overlooking the base—Freedom Ridge and White Sides—were closed by the military in April 1995 after a bitterly contested withdrawal process. You can still see the base from distant mountains but the hike is strenuous and not appropriate for most casual visitors. The most popular of these is Tikaboo Peak, which overlooks the base from 25 miles to the east. The distance makes it difficult to make out many details with the naked eye. With a telescope from Tikaboo Peak, you look down on an airstrip and many hangars beside a dry lake bed. There is nothing apparently unworldly about this base; it looks at first glance like many other Air Force installations, although the airstrip, hangers and radar facilities are unusually large.

Will I encounter security personnel in the area?

If you leave the paved road and approach the Restricted Zone west of Highway 375, it is likely you will be closely watched by military security patrols. The boundaries near Groom Lake are patrolled by two-man teams in four wheel drive vehicles. Look for a white Jeep Cherokee with a light bar on top bearing two male occupants wearing camouflage fatigues. These are anonymous, well-armed chaps—known to watchers as the "Cammo Dudes"—who will admit only to working for a "civilian entity." Early Black Mailbox folklore said that they work for the Wackenhut Corporation under military contract, but more reliable evidence indicates they are a mixture of military officers and civilian employees of another government contractor, EG&G.[7] These guards appear to have no sustainable legal authority outside the Restricted Zone, but they also have no responsibility to please the public and are accountable for their actions only to the military. The military, in turn, does not acknowledge that they exist. Although as evasive as field mice under relaxed circumstances, you would not want to get on their bad side. These guards have the guns, brawn and anonymity to do what they want, and there aren't many witnesses out here to say that you were right and they were wrong.

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[6]The name comes from an unexplained line item in a Pentagon budget. The official name has probably changed. See the *Aviation Week* articles in REFERENCES. The latest reports now indicate that "Aurora" refers only to a B-2 funding proposal, not a hypersonic craft, but the name has stuck.

[7]EG&G has announced that it will be withdrawing from many operations in nearby areas, so the contractor could change.

You have nothing to worry about if you remain in the vicinity of the paved highway, but as you approach the Restricted Zone on dirt roads, the security people tend to become increasingly edgy, and they may try to bluff you into leaving if they think you are naive. As they see it, you are "challenging their borders," even if you do not actually cross. If they feel you are doing something illegal, they will call the County Sheriff. They used to call the Sheriff whenever a visitor was near the border, but now the Sheriff's deputies visit only rarely, usually when someone has actually crossed the border. Although you have a full legal right to travel on the public lands bordering the Zone, you should also be careful about obeying the law, because a lot of eyes will be watching, and any breach might be sufficient excuse for the Sheriff to be called.

It is our advice that visitors should not carry guns, because this would only provide further excuse for conflict. If you have one in your car, it is probably best to lock it in the trunk. The guns of the security force will always be bigger than yours, and having a weapon in your possession just gives them an excuse to shoot.

What will happen if I intrude into the Restricted Zone.

Don't do it. You should not be fooled by the absence of fences along many parts of the border. Intruding into the Restricted Zone is a serious offense and should not be taken lightly. If you violate the zone, you are leaving civilian territory and surrendering your usual citizen protections. To put it bluntly, *they can kill you.* The signs at the border say, "Use of Deadly Force Authorized," and even if it have never been exercised, the emotional tone is clear. Don't get any kooky ideas about conducting Greenpeace-style commando raids or storming the border *en masse* to overwhelm security and "smash open the wall of UFO secrecy." These installations are equipped with overwhelming firepower, and stopping an invasion is exactly what it is there for.

It is also important to remember that the Restricted Zone is not shown accurately on some older maps. The border is usually marked by "Restricted Area" signs wherever it intersects a navigable dirt road and by orange posts every 50 feet in the desert, but there is often no fence or gate. Ignorance is not a legal defense for driving past the signs, and even to drive up to the guard house 1/2 mile inside the border will probably result in your immediate arrest. Short of being shot, the maximum theoretical penalty for intrusion is one year imprisonment and a $5,000 fine, although a misdemeanor fine of $600 is the norm.

Who owns the land outside the Restricted Zone?

Most of the land surrounding the military area—as well as the majority of the land in Nevada—is public land owned by "us," the American people. This land is managed as a public trust by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management which leases the right to use it to ranchers and miners. You have a right to travel or camp anywhere you want on BLM land as long as you stay clear of tenant installations like buildings, corrals and water troughs and observe reasonable courtesies like closing cattle gates behind you. In the vicinity of the Black Mailbox, the only tenant is the Medlin Ranch, which holds grazing and water rights in the Tikaboo Valley. The Medlins and their employees are not government agents, just hard-working people trying to make a living on a very sparse land. Because the ranch still holds grazing rights on military land, the Medlins have probably been required to sign secrecy forms and are almost certainly barred from discussing any military or aerial activity in the area. Regardless of what your legal rights may be, it is common courtesy to stay as far away as possible from the ranch compound. Do not pester the Medlins with questions and don't do anything that would be annoying to *you* if you were in their shoes.

Scattered pockets of land, like the house sites and farm around Rachel, are privately owned, and you should stay clear of these properties anyway as a matter of courtesy. Study your maps, give all buildings a wide berth, stay on existing roads, and watch for posted signs that might hint at local sentiments. If you encounter any kind of Keep Out sign, then do not proceed.

How do the local residents feel about flying saucers and the people who come looking for them?

No one claims to fully understand everything going on at the "Test Site"—the local term for everything beyond the border. Only outsiders think they have things all worked out, usually before they even arrive. In general, local residents are skeptical of the UFO claims, but UFOs are taken more seriously than visiting UFO watchers. Nearly every resident here seems to have an amusing story to tell about the watchers seeing "UFOs" in planes, flares and other conventional objects. Local residents get a chuckle out of seeing visitors sneak around like spies, but the watchers have also caused some senseless damage and no one laughs about that. Nearly everyone living along this highway has seen spectacular aerial lights, but most residents do not think it represents alien technology.

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Plenty of loony people have come here spouting a lot of exotic theories, and this may result in a natural reluctance of many residents to discuss the matter. The few residents who work across the line are barred by oath from discussing anything there, so don't bother them. Visitors are welcome here as long as they adhere to a commonsense respect for residents' privacy and property. If you don't come off like a flake or try to browbeat people with your opinions, then residents might be willing to talk to you, but in general it is probably best to leave them their space and conduct your own independent investigation.

The primary local merchant catering to UFO watchers is the Little A'Le'Inn, formerly the Rachel Bar and Grill, where all the UFO and conspiracy stories are accepted as real and anti-government rhetoric flows freely. You can feel comfortable asking the staff there about UFOs, because unlike other Rachel residents, they have accepted a role to serve visitors. Ask them when the UFOs were last spotted, and they'll usually tell you, "Just the other night." The proprietors rarely leave the establishment, however, and they have a definite financial stake in perpetuating the myth, so *caveat emptor*.

Will I be abducted by aliens while visiting this area? Are my cattle safe? Should I look for crop circles in the desert brush?

According to Lazar's claims, these saucers may be of alien origin, but they are currently housed and operated by humans. There is nothing in Lazar's story to suggest that current alien activity is greater here than anyplace else.

That said, cattle mutilations *have* been reported nearby. Reputable ranchers in Lincoln County claim to have lost a number of animals to this mysterious "disease"—that is, all blood drained from the body without a drop on the ground, laser-like "zipper" incisions in the corpse and parts of the body surgically removed—but most such incidents happened in the 70s and 80s. Human abductions have also been reported: A prominent ufologist and his companion claim to have been abducted in the Tikaboo Valley in March 1993.[8] Where the truth lies is anybody's guess, but if you are going to be fearful here, you might as well live in fear anywhere on the planet. If the aliens are real and have all the powers they are credited with, then there is probably no place you can hide: If they wanna getcha, they're gonna getcha.

Might I "disappear" or "have an unfortunate accident" if I see more than the government wants me to?

As far as can be determined, no deliberate physical harm has ever befallen a watcher in this area. People have supposedly had guns pointed at them, and those who have violated the Restricted Zone have been arrested and given stiff fines, but government interference appears unlikely if you simply stay outside the border. If the cover-up is real, then some "saucer nut" miles away, taking fuzzy photographs and telling unverifiable stories, isn't nearly as much of a security threat as, say, a government insider with first-hand knowledge. Any effort to discredit UFO enthusiasts or suppress their testimony would be more trouble than it is worth, since most are undisciplined observers anyway and usually end up sabotaging their own credibility with unsupported speculations.

That does not mean you are safe from all threats, however. The saucer nut's greatest enemy is himself if he does not understand his own limitations and the natural dangers of the desert.

What conventional dangers do I face in this area?

The most serious conventional threat is... cattle mutilation. This kind is not bloodless, however. Highway 375 runs through unfenced range. The stock are cleverly camouflaged and have little fear of the road, so you have to be alert at all times. These animals *want* to be mutilated, but the encounter isn't so healthy for you or your car. The danger is ever-present but is especially serious on 375 at night, when a maximum speed of 55 mph is recommended.

The second most serious danger is your vehicle breaking down or getting stuck on a remote dirt road. Nevada is a land of freedom and self-reliance, and that includes the freedom to sabotage yourself without any hope of rescue. If you choose to leave the paved highway, make sure you have brought enough water and other supplies to get yourself out of any mess you can get into.

In the summer, sunburn and dehydration should be given serious consideration. Wear light clothing and a wide-brim hat and carry plenty of water. Short pants are a must. You should also be prepared for nighttime cold any time of year. In this high altitude desert, the temperature plummets after dark—by as much as 50°—and you may need warm clothes to compensate. In the winter, temperatures can be bitter, bottoming out at

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[8] See the report by the victim, Bill Hamilton, in *MUFON UFO Journal*, August 1993.

about -10°F on the coldest January night.[9] In spring and fall, the weather can be nice—or lousy. The problem is high winds which whip across the barren land with terrible intensity. Except in the summer, when temperatures at this altitude are very comfortable, this is not usually an inviting land.

Lessor dangers include falling down abandoned mine shafts and being bit by desert critters. Both events are rare, however, and can be avoided by watching where you step. The hills of this region are peppered with mine tunnels, which can be structurally unstable inside. Unless you understand mines, stay out.

Advice to Visitors

In my two years living in Rachel, I saw a lot of fascinating phenomena in the skies—often spectacular displays that at first glance I would swear was something out-of-this-world—but after additional investigation, I have always been able to find a reasonable explanation in military exercises, known celestial activity or optical effects. My own experiences neither prove nor disprove other people's sightings or the stories told by Lazar and other former workers about alien craft at or near Area 51. These stories remain intriguing to me, and I see the mystery as far from solved. What I find difficult to swallow are the many exotic claims of the UFO believers on the highway. In my view, most of the publicized UFO claims for this area have a cartoon silliness to them. They assume either a vast, all-inclusive government conspiracy or that the government lacks any brains at all. The military is well practiced in keeping things secret, and human bureaucracies like this do not usually have the subtlety to do the job halfway.

It is my advice to visitors to not search for flying saucers or secret aircraft directly. Instead, you should pursue other outdoor activities and your own education. Use this as an excuse to camp under the stars, hike in the mountains and try to understand the land and sky. Should a flying saucer or Aurora happen to show, you will be in a good position to see it, but even if nothing so amazing occurs your visit will not be wasted.

Something secret that you can see is the installation at Groom Lake. For experienced hikers, Tikaboo Peak offers a view of Groom Lake, "the base that doesn't exist." This base is a strange anachronism from the Cold War, and looking down on it captures some of the thrill and mystery of peering over the Berlin Wall in the days when there was one. As you look through your binoculars at this big complex of hangers, factories, warehouses and satellite dishes, you may begin to see that the real issue to get upset about is not the government's alleged suppression of UFO material but the absurd level of secrecy that exists here anyway. What America was supposed to be fighting for in the Cold War was the openness and freedoms of our society; yet, here in the middle of the Nevada desert we have preserved our own little pocket of Communism....

Beyond the border, there are no rights. This country-within-a-country is dominated by vast, hierarchically structured, state-sponsored enterprises, probably of low efficiency, where individual conscience and creativity are firmly discouraged and citizen protections are signed away as the price of employment. The worker here has been told to keep his eyes down and not ask questions about things that are outside of his work area, and it is not love of country but fear for his own safety that keeps him in line. He knows that he must watch what he says and does at all times, because the "secret police" may be watching, and they know no bounds.

If you understand how the Groom Lake base can continue to "not exist" in spite of all the obvious evidence to the contrary and how thousands of workers can be kept from talking about it, then you will see that almost anything could be kept secret here, even craft from other worlds.

> *"If there is one basic element of our Constitution, it is civilian control of the military."*
>
> *—Harry S. Truman*

[9] People from Southern California often seem particularly ill prepared for the cold, not fully comprehending the concept.

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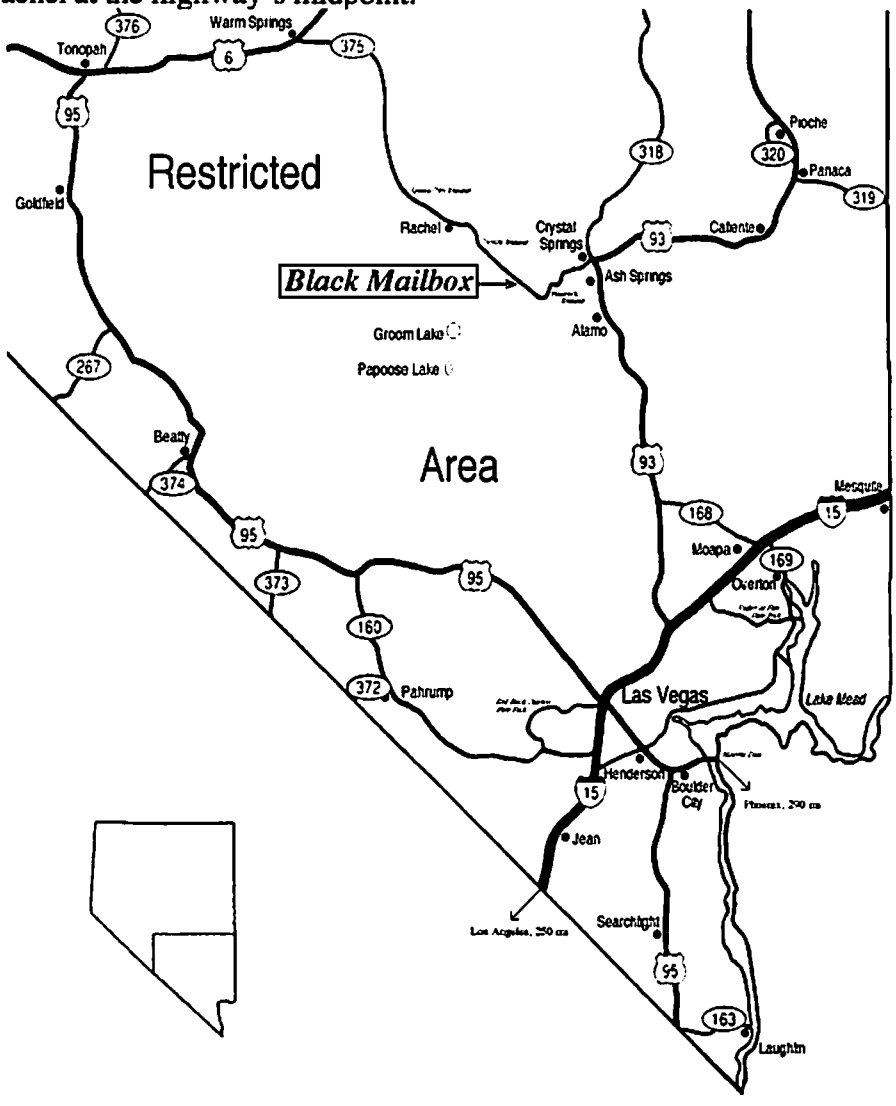
The Highway and the Land

As a cut-off between the lightly traveled US-93 and even quieter US-6, State Highway 375 easily qualifies as one of the loneliest roads in America. There are only a handful of residents along its hundred mile length, most of them in the tiny settlement of Rachel at the highway's midpoint.



Geography. The highway runs southeast to northwest through a sagebrush desert along the northern boundary of the vast military restricted area. The terrain is a series of parallel desert valleys, each running roughly north to south and separated by rugged and treeless mountain ranges. Each valley is a vast, bowl shaped basin that was probably a lake in wetter times. Today the only hint of standing water is usually a dry lake bed to which seasonal rainwater flows and then evaporates. A typical valley is about 15 miles wide and 30-40 miles long and seems from a distance completely barren and reminiscent of the planet Mars. The absence of trees, concave valley shape and dry desert air mean that from any one point in a valley you can usually see every other point, even dozens of miles away. There is little privacy here, but then again, there is usually no one watching you either. In a typical desert valley, a ranch is the only habitation, meaning that the population density is considerably less than one person per square mile. It is more like one cow per square mile.

Plant and Animal Life. The most visible residents of most of these desert valleys are cattle, who wander unfenced across the road. You will also see jackrabbits, many kinds of little lizards and perhaps a coyote or deer. Most other animal residents remain out of sight during the day. A walk through the desert reveals the ground riddled with burrows, home of nocturnal creatures who you will probably never meet. Likewise, you will not encounter much impressive plant life in this desert, like the giant saguaros of Arizona, or even a tree. Only desert scrub grows here, even on the mountains. This desert is on the border of the Mojave and Great Basin deserts. The only large plant is the Joshua tree, the signature plant of the Mojave. It was named by the early Mormon settlers who saw in this tall plant the prophet Joshua raising his arms to heaven. These can grow 20 feet in height, but they are limited to the eastern half of the highway where winter snow does not last long. Most of the vegetation elsewhere is stiff shrubs and grasses which appears gray and lifeless most of the year. When the weather is windy, tumbleweeds blow across the highway like in the Hollywood westerns.

Climate. Although this area is relatively close to Las Vegas, the climate is much cooler. The town of Rachel is at an elevation of 5000 feet compared to 2000 feet for Las Vegas, so temperatures are usually 10° to 20° lower, and snow is common in winter. While winter weather is considerably worse than Las Vegas, the summer climate is much more comfortable. In Las Vegas, July and August may be unbearable without air

conditioning, with temperatures over 110°F, but Rachel is easier to take. The temperature here rarely breaks 100°, and due to the dryness of the air, 100° here can be more comfortable than 80° in more humid states.

Summer offers the most comfortable weather for outdoor activities. As long as one dresses lightly, wears a hat and drinks plenty of water, the heat is not dangerous or uncomfortable and does not prevent most activities. The weather in the fall is usually pleasant, with highs of 60° to 80° during the day and lows of 30° to 50° at night. Spring days can be just as nice but are more likely to be marred by fierce winds in the afternoon. Winter weather can be overcast and painfully cold if you are not prepared for it. The daily temperature is usually directly related to solar energy, so the shortest days of the year are also the coldest. The nighttime low can approach -10°F around the first of the year. The rest of the winter is milder in temperature but often equally uncomfortable due to violent winds. Light snow is common along 375 in the winter, but after January, it usually melts in the valleys within a couple of days.

The Skies. For a visitor from any urban area, rural Nevada's nighttime skies are an amazing show—with or without aerial craft. On moonless nights, stars usually blanket the heavens in an amazing density and are perfectly clear down to the horizon.[10] There are so many stars that it can be hard to pick out the major constellations among the clutter. The Milky Way cuts a bright band of white across the sky, and the whole celestial production casts enough light, without a moon, that you can see the outlines of your immediate surroundings on earth. In the rural Nevada skies, there is very little of the "light pollution" found in populated areas. In most other areas of the country, the sky glows with the overflow of street lamps reflecting from the clouds and haze, but here there are almost no artificial lights. Along 375, the only noticeable light pollution is a smudge above the southern horizon. This is the reflected glow of Las Vegas, a city known for its superfluous lighting. The extreme clarity of the night sky may make it easier to spot aerial objects, but it can also disorient watchers with deceptive distances and common celestial phenomena like meteors and satellites which would go unnoticed elsewhere.

The Road. Although Highway 375 seems remote by most definitions, it is not hard to get to, at least from the south. From Las Vegas to the Black Mailbox is any easy drive of just over two hours on top quality, cruise-control compatible highways. 375 itself is a two lane blacktop in excellent condition. It has wide shoulders, few curves, only moderate grades and no potholes. Needless to say, there is not much traffic to contend with: no more than a dozen cars an hour at "rush hour" and less than one an hour late at night. The only significant traffic danger is the cattle that wander across the road.

> *"The conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."*
>
> *—Dwight D. Eisenhower in his farewell address, Jan. 17, 1961*

[10] When there is a moon, however, the skies are much less impressive—not much better than urban skies. You may want to check the moon's phase in you local newspaper before planning a visit here. Remember that the moon's cycle is about one month long. In the days after the full moon, the moon rises later and later in the evening.

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Preparation

Recommended Equipment

Services are extremely limited along Highway 375: Just one gas station, a restaurant and simple lodging in Rachel. The next inhabited town westbound is Tonopah, 110 miles from Rachel, but even this isn't exactly Mall City—just one large supermarket, well-stocked but with highway-robbery prices. Eastbound, there are gas stations, small grocery stores, lodging and a scattering of small shops in Caliente, Ash Springs and Alamo. The closest major supermarkets and department stores are in Cedar City, Las Vegas and Reno; if you are passing through any of these cities be sure to stock up on food and supplies there. Following are some items to consider bringing on an expedition to this area.

A supply of ***drinking water*** is essential any time of the year, but it is especially critical in the summer. [See SUMMER PREPARATIONS, below.]

Binoculars are useful for general sightseeing and are absolutely essential for any kind of serious sky watching. These need not be expensive: A $20 pair can offer pretty much the same view as a $100 model of the same magnification and objective lens width. (I bought mine at Wal-Mart for $40: Simmons 10 x 50, an excellent pair I highly recommend.) Due to the clarity of the desert air, visibility is limited only by the power of your viewing device, but the view through hand-held binoculars also tends to get shakier at higher magnifications. You should be suspicious of inexpensive binoculars and telescopes of a magnification greater than 10x; light gathering ability may be sacrificed and the narrower field of view may make it difficult to scan a wide area of the sky and locate moving targets. Unless you have a few hundred dollars to spend on something fancy, 10 x 50 binoculars are probably the best choice.

Keeping your binoculars steady can be a problem at any magnification, especially if you are trying to judge the motion of an isolated light, which inevitably appears to jump around. Consider bringing a tripod or some other kind of mount to hold them. For reporting your observations to others, it is useful to know the field of view of your binoculars. This is usually printed on the top of the binoculars as arc degrees (usually 5° to 10°) or as the field width at a distance of 1000 yard or meters (usually 200 to 400 feet at 1000 yards). If someone asks, "How big was it?" or "How far did it move?" you can answer in terms of the field width of your binoculars.

The next step up from binoculars is a ***spotting scope***, which usually refers to a small refractor telescope about 1-1/2 feet long. A lot of the spotting scopes available are junk and offer a view that is no better than a good pair of binoculars. However, one model that I have been happy with is the Bausch & Lomb Discoverer Telescope, with a 60 mm objective lens and 15x-to-60x zoom. At 15x, you can hold the telescope in your hand. At higher magnifications, you'll need to prop it up on something. You could use a tripod, but I find it easier to lay it down on a pile of clothing, either on rock or on the top of my car. An added advantage of the Discoverer is that a simple tube adapter turns it into a telephoto lens for any SLR camera. The telescope itself is available for under $200 at mail order houses advertised in astronomy magazines. Camera adapter, mount and a carrying case might add $50 to that.

Dark sunglasses are useful during the day, since the bright sun can be almost painful reflecting from the light colored land surfaces.

Remember to bring a ***flashlight***. You'll need it at night. It is also a good idea to bring a flashlight whenever exploring during the day. You could encounter a cave or other dark place you want to look into.

Warm clothing is important for nighttime watching, since the temperature drops rapidly after dark. Be prepared for 45° below the daytime temperature. Also be sure to bring adequate bedding for this temperature if you plan to sleep in your vehicle or out in the open. Arctic attire is appropriate for winter nights, when temperatures fall well below freezing. During the off-season, I have two words of advice: "thermal underwear." A layer or two (or three) of this close to your skin is worth more than anything you can throw on top. ***Light Clothing***—short pants and short sleeve shirt—are very important in the summer to allow your body's natural cooling system to do its job. Sturdy ***hiking shoes*** are important if you plan to hike in the desert. Sandals are definitely not appropriate, given the rugged terrain and many sharp needles. Tennis shoes may be adequate but not very comfortable on the sharp rocks found here. High top hiking boots are best because they protect you ankles from thorns and help keep the sand out of your shoes.

Camping is the best form of accommodations in this area, since it is legal to camp almost anywhere you want on public land and it brings you close to the "action."[11] Even if you hope to find other accommodations, bringing a sleeping bag and other camping gear would at least increase your lodging flexibility. Since it rarely rains, a tent itself may not be necessary if you have a sleeping bag appropriate to the temperature and a ground cover to lay out under it. A tent is chiefly a psychological comfort: Some people feel a jittery about exposing themselves directly to the sky and all the nighttime critters of the imagination (although I have never had a problem with it).

An ***RV*** would be nice to bring along if you have one; there are plenty of hookups in Rachel and many discreet places to park everywhere else. Nevada is RV Heaven: You can park pretty much anywhere without being bothered. RVs can be rented in Las Vegas for about $100 a day. As an alternative, if renting a car, you may want to consider a full-size model for the extra sleeping space. Renting a luxury car would also give you ***cruise control***, which greatly enhances driving comfort on this sort of landscape. On these straight and open highways, you can almost set your speed, crawl into the back and sleep until you get there.

An eminently useful accessory would be a ***high clearance vehicle***, like a pickup truck, four wheel drive or Humvee, but such craft are not required for casual visits. Highway 375 is a sealed blacktop in excellent condition, and many of the dirt roads leading off it are well maintained and possible for a passenger car to handle. On more rugged unmaintained dirt roads, four wheel drive is not as important as high clearance, since the major problem is not steep slopes but high rocks and plants in the middle hump of the road. ***Four wheel drive*** is certainly be handy, allowing you to explore even further into the mountains. You may want to consider renting a 4WD in Las Vegas. Some of the major car rental agencies at McCarran airport offer them.[12] (See "Four Wheel Drive Advice" below.)

If you are serious about scanning the skies for craft, these items might be helpful: An ***electronic kitchen timer*** that you can set to go off at periodic intervals. If nothing is happening in the sky, you can set the timer and go to sleep, then wake up every hour or so for sample observations. A ***compass*** might be handy, but it is not required, since it is easy to determine direction using a map and surrounding landmarks. Serious UFO or aircraft watchers should consider bringing a small, hand-held ***tape recorder*** to record observations as they happen. In the dark, it is hard to write things down, and the human memory for details fades quickly. If you see an aerial light, you can talk about where it is, how it moves and when it appears and disappears. If you take pictures, you can record the f-stop and exposure settings. If you travel new roads, you can record the mileage points and landmarks as you drive. A tape recorder is an immensely helpful item for data collection, with the only problem being what to *do* with the data once you have collected it.

Finally, if you plan to spend the night looking for lights in the sky, I suggest bringing a healthy supply of ***caffeine***, in whatever form is your pleasure.

If yóu have them...

I remain skeptical of those new yuppie accessories, a ***night vision scope*** or goggles and a ***GPS (Global Positioning System) receiver***. Bring them if you have them, but don't rush out to buy them unless you know you'll get your money's worth before the price drops again. We have had these along on our expeditions and never used them much. The cheap Russian night scopes that are now the rage certainly do enhance visibility, but I also find that looking into the bright eyepiece disrupts my night vision when I put the scope down. I find my $40 Wal-Mart 10 x 50 binoculars to be an excellent replacement; they enhance low-light visibility without disrupting night vision.

A GPS receiver must be good for *something*, but I haven't yet figured out what. Knowing your exact latitude, longitude and altitude is certainly nifty, but a good map should tell you that and a lot more. Both GPS receiver and night vision scopes are the sort of high-tech items that if you buy them now, you'll be embarrassed in six months when better products are available for half the price. I'll buy these toys when they're available for $100 or less at Wal-Mart.

Cameras

A still or video camera is not as useful as you might suppose for proving that you saw a certain nighttime display. Take a snapshot of a moving aerial light, and what you get is an ambiguous blob or streak in the middle of the picture. Scattered throughout the Little A'Le'Inn are many snapshots taken by visitors, each as

[11] Whatever that means. Las Vegas is always advertizing it's "action" so we can to.

[12] They are usually about $50-$60/day or $250/week plus insurance. Try Thrifty, Alamo or National.

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vague and unsatisfying as the next. A blob or squiggle of light in the middle of a dark photo could have a lot of explanations and does not prove anything to a stranger. The same applies to video pictures: Most camcorders are not nearly as sensitive to low light as the human eye, so you might only capture a *moving* ambiguous blob. While a bright light itself might show up on film or video tape, the most important element of such pictures is some kind of identifiable background to put the blob into perspective. Good photography at night requires a high degree of technical skill, and the attempt to take pictures may only distract you from more useful observations.

If you do intend to take still pictures under nighttime conditions, it is important to experiment beforehand with films and exposures. Go out at night in a dark part of your own town and try taking pictures of planes passing overhead. At night, it is not possible to take a quick snapshot and expect to capture anything useful. Auto-focus, auto-exposure and other newfangled camera features are virtually useless under these near-darkness conditions. Long exposures are usually required, and that means you need a tripod and a remote shutter release cable or control. The ideal photograph would show the horizon or the stars, in front of which a moving object would perform its show. This streak of light might not prove anything to someone else, but it would at least provide a personal reference for your own recollections of the event—color, size, direction of movement, etc. The photograph might show at least that the sighting is not an obvious misidentification, like a meteor, car headlights or a planet. A photograph, no matter how good, means very little by itself. As a record of your sighting, it would only supplement, not replace, a precise verbal description.

In my own experiments, I have obtained satisfactory pictures of the stars and planes passing in front of them with ASA-400 film, aperture wide open at f1.8 and a minimum exposure of 15 seconds. With other films and lenses, exposures of many minutes may be required. On clear, moonless nights, overexposure is not much of a threat, but in shots of more than 30 seconds you can expect to see the stars appear as streaks as the earth rotates on its axis. Since nighttime photography is an imprecise art, it is important to record the particulars of each shot: f-stop, exposure, date, time of day, zoom factor, location, direction, subject. It is nice to have a tape recorder for this, then later transcribe this data into a notebook or computer. This information becomes vital if you actually capture something unusual on film, and even if you don't, it still gives you feedback to improve your future pictures.

One problem I have found with taking pictures of stars or nighttime aerial lights is that there is so much black in the picture that the photo processor thinks there is nothing there and does not print the picture. Even when you ask for reprints, the black background may lead to the print being overexposed or not being properly centered. One way around this is to take a *flash* picture. This may seem as absurd as taking a flash picture in a football stadium: The flash is too far away to illuminate the object you are photographing. However, the flash would illuminate your immediate surroundings along the periphery of your photograph, like vegetation on the ground. Then, the processor will know to print the picture and your photo will also contain a frame of reference. If you are out in the open, try positioning yourself so there is a Joshua tree or some other object in the foreground. You may run the risk of chasing away the aliens with your flashbulb, but, heck, it could also attract them, and the opportunity for one good shot may be worth the risk.

A high power telephoto camera lens is probably not very helpful unless it is a very sensitive and expensive one. At night, a high magnification is only useful if you have a steady tripod and know where to point the camera; an unpredictable, swiftly moving target would be very hard to capture. The best choice of primary lens would probably be a medium power zoom lens, say 80-300mm. You can start out with a wide view, then zoom in on an object if it happens to stand still. In general, low-light capability would probably be as helpful as high magnification, since this would allow you to take shorter exposures and capture faster action.

The low light shortcomings of most consumer video cameras make them almost useless at night, since a bright blob dancing alone in the frame means little. A camcorder would certainly be helpful if a brightly lit spaceship or Aurora happened to swoop down within a few feet of you, but for long-range shots of moving lights, it would mainly be useful around dusk and dawn when the background landscape is still sufficiently illuminated to register in the frame. There already seem to be many home videos floating around of erratically moving lights taken from the Black Mailbox, most of them inconclusive. Unless there are reference points in the frame, it is hard to be sure the object is moving and not the camera.

Legal Considerations

Photography is a highly sensitive topic around the Restricted Zone and has been the major cause of friction between the authorities and the watchers. At this point, however, the watchers appear to be winning: Since two embarrassing and well-publicized video tape seizures from TV crews in 1994,[13] there have been no direct

[13] ABC News in March and KNBC/Los Angeles in July.

conflicts.

The law that is usually cited is as follows (18 U.S.C. 795, June 25, 1948)....

Photographing and sketching defense installations

(a) Whenever, in the interests of national defense, the President defines certain vital military installations or equipment as requiring protection against the general dissemination of information relative thereto, it shall be unlawful to make any photograph, sketch, picture, drawing, map, or graphical representation of such vital military and naval installations or equipment without first obtaining permission of the commanding officer of the military or navel post, camp, or station, or naval vessels, military and naval aircraft, and any separate military or naval command concerned, or higher authority, and promptly submitting the product obtained to such commanding officer or higher authority for censorship or such other action as he may deem necessary.

(b) Whoever violates this section shall be fined not more that $1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

There is a lot of ambiguity in the law above, and it is very difficult to enforce against civilians who remain on public land. In the case of Groom Lake, the installations and equipment do not officially exist, so how can a civilian know what he can and cannot take a picture of? Foreign spy satellites pass over the area daily, and these photos are now available for sale without restriction. Conflicts over photography chiefly concerned pictures of the base taken from Freedom Ridge or White Sides. Since these viewpoints are now closed, the photography issue may be dead. So far, there have been no conflicts over photography from Tikaboo Peak, which is far from the military border. In case

If You Are Challenged by the Sheriff

Although there have been no conflicts over photography in the year prior to this edition, here's a discussion of rights and legalities should any challenge occur...

If the Cammo Dudes feel that you have photographed the secret base, they may call the county Sheriff, and a deputy arrives and ask for your film. If you admit to taking pictures around the area but none were of the secret base, the Sheriff's offer to "process" your film for you sounds like a great deal: free photo developing at government expense.[14] If you have not violated the federal regulation given above, you may feel, as I did, that there is no reason to turn down the offer. Unfortunately, this isn't Photo Express. Processing time is horrendous, and customer service virtually nonexistent. On average, you can expect to get your prints back when hell freezes over. As of this writing, over two years have gone by since I turned over my own film for "processing" with no pictures received and no notice yet given that they are being seized. My written inquiries have gone unanswered, and there is no "800" number for complaints.

My own pictures are mostly of the black helicopter passing over public land, and they include one critical close-up sequence of the helicopter deliberately blasting a companion and myself at very low altitude. Perhaps I was naive to think that these photos would ever come back to me, but I thought that the law was on my side. I was aware of the above regulation and figured that (a) there were no sensitive installations in my photos; (b) the "equipment" buzzing me was clearly displayed over public land so couldn't possibly be secret, and (c) the film contained evidence of possible military misconduct—an assault with a deadly weapon on public land—and I thought that the civilian authorities would have the public relations sense not to try to suppress it. Apparently, I was wrong on the third count. The civilian authorities seem happy to take on the Air Force's problems, even if it means bad press all over the country.

If you turn over your film or video tape to the Sheriff's Dept., you will never see it again, in spite of any promises made by the deputy that you'll have it back if no installations show up on the film. Any film taken from visitors on public is turned over immediately to the anonymous security force without receipt, and they keep it forever. The only time film or video tape was returned was in the case of *ABC News*, because they had the clout and lawyers. You don't. There has been a long running battle between the Sheriff's Dept. and myself on this issue, and simply put, I don't trust 'em. This is a hillbilly police force, lead by a homeboy named Dahl Bradfield, with no real grasp of the law and no understanding of separation of power or civilian rights as is accepted in any urban environment. It has no effect on this police force if negative stories about it run in the *New York Times*, *ABC News*, *Popular Science* or any of the Las Vegas press, as they have. Lincoln County is a universe unto itself with little interest in the opinions or intellectual concepts of the outside world.

[14] They won't do double prints, however. I asked.

[15] Admitting that I have no legal training and that still have a lot to learn.

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Note that the federal regulation quoted above requires that, if you did take pictures of sensitive installations or equipment, you must turn these photos over to the base commander for possible censorship or other action. The law does not require that you turn over your film if you have *not* taken any pictures of sensitive installations or equipment. Therefore, if you do voluntarily turn over your film to the authorities, it could be seen as a form of self-incrimination, an admission that you were doing something wrong. Under the constitution, you cannot be compelled to give evidence against yourself, and whether you are guilty or innocent of the crimes suggested, it is your right to not cooperate with any investigation that might be targeted against you. If you feel yourself innocent of any breach of law, my advice *used* to be that you might as well turn over your film to the Sheriff because you have nothing to hide. Now, I say the opposite. Because the definition of what constitutes a "restricted installation" is so vague, and because the judgment process here is so inaccessible and one-sided, you can never know what evidence might be used against you, and it is best not to surrender any personal or property right without a fight. I say that if you have not broken any law, then you are under no obligation to turn over your film, and, indeed, holding onto it is the best way to proclaim your innocence.

A Sample Encounter

The following is my best memory of an exchange between a deputy sheriff and myself regarding the searching of my backpack, Aug. 28,1993. Four companions and myself had been awakened by the deputy when he and a Cammo Dude made a surprise 2 am visit to our campsite on Freedom Ridge. The words are not exact, since I did not tape record the exchange, but I think the gist is preserved.

Deputy: I am going to ask to search your backpack for cameras.

Civilian: I would prefer that you not search my backpack.

Deputy: Why won't you let me search my pack?

Civilian: I have my own personal reasons.

Deputy: If you do not let me search your pack, that indicates to me that you must have a camera in there.

Civilian: You understand the law as well as I do. If I do not want you to search my pack, it does not mean anything more than that.

Deputy: If you do not allow me to search your pack, I may have to take you to Pioche to resolve this.

Civilian: You should do whatever you have to do. I do not want you searching my pack.

There were similar exchanges between the deputy and other members of our party, all still in our sleeping bags. All of us declined the deputy's offer to have our luggage searched, although we did gave him our names and IDs when he asked. After consultation with his superiors, the deputy took no further action and never did get to see inside our packs, apparently lacking probable cause for detaining us and obtaining a warrant.

So what was inside my pack? Aside from numerous items scattered on the ground, my pack contained some water, a shirt, a six pack of soft drinks, an "MRE" military dinner (chicken stew) and an assortment of junk food. No camera, honest. Sometimes, a man just has to defend his Twinkees.

If you see a Sheriff's vehicle coming, by all means be discreet. Keep your camera under cover at all times and don't let any evidence of photography be seen. I do not suggest that you lie to the Sheriff or to any other government employee—That is illegal.—but you do not have to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with. There is a well worn phrase often used by Test Site employees in similar awkward situations. When a worker is asked a question that he thinks it unwise to answer, he does not lie, mislead, procrastinate or make angry countercharges. He replies calmly and without any suggestion of malice or personal conflict.

He says: "If I told you that, I'd have to kill you."

Standing up for your rights does not mean that you have to be rude or argumentative toward the officer. He has his job to do and you have yours, and just because your professional goals conflict with his is no reason you can't find common ground as human beings. When pressed, all you need to do is cautiously select the appropriate reply—the words your lawyer might advise—for whatever question or request the officer makes of you. The deputy probably does not want this encounter any more than you do, but his superies require that certain procedures be followed when a complaint has been made. You, in turn, must adhere to your own necessary procedures. If you reply coolly and logically, remembering your manners and letting him do most of the talking, then the encounter will go much more smoothly for both of you.

Final advice: As you are leaving the area, you *must* take a picture of the "No Photography" signs at the border on Groom Lake Road. This is an Area 51 tradition. Also, try to get a clear, close-up picture of any of the Cammo Dudes, and let me know if you do. We are considering assembling a "yearbook" of Cammo Dudes for publication on the internet.

Scanner Radio

There is a lot of communications traffic in and around the Restricted Zone. Air controllers talk to employee shuttle jets; security guards talk to other security guards; fighter pilots talk to each other and the ground. There has even been a rumor (although a bit of a stretch) that flying saucers at S-4 talk to the ground by radio. You may be able to hear some of this traffic if you bring a scanner radio, the kind that is popular today for listening to police and aircraft transmissions. This is a tool mostly for techies who have the time and patience to play around with frequencies, but there is a big potential payoff in better understanding the military activity in the area.

Some sensitive channels may be scrambled or otherwise unreceivable, but many transmissions from inside the border are "in the clear" and can be easily picked up if you only know where to look. The selection of a scanner can be a complex undertaking and require some research. Commonly available scanners start at about

$100 for the police, fire and aircraft bands, with military air and cellular telephone bands blacked out. This is fine for a newcomer. More expensive scanners give you the military air band of 200-325Mhz. Scanners currently manufactured or imported are supposed to have the cellular bands blacked out, but you may still be able to find some "full-range" scanners the give you *all* the frequencies, including military and cellular, from 0.5 to 1300 MHz. Although I have one of these, I find the psychological comfort of omniscience to be outweighed by the difficulty of use. Most of the frequencies from inside the border can be received by any off-the-shelf scanner. I use the Uniden Bearcat 2500XLT (about $450), but some aficionados say it is too sensitive for urban environments. Good prices on Uniden scanners can be found in the Damark catalog (800-729-9000).

Many ads and much info can be found in the monthly magazine *Monitoring Times*, available for $19.95 a year from Monitoring Times, Box 98, Brasstown, NC 28902. It is a good idea to subscribe before buying a scanner yourself so you know what the best prices are and what kind of features people are talking about. Another monthly publication, *Intercepts Newsletter*, is specifically intended for hobbyists who monitor the military. It includes occasional updates on military frequencies for Nellis and other bases. It is available for $18.00/year from Steve Douglass, P.O. Box 7176, Amarillo, TX 79114. (Douglass is also author of a book, the *Comprehensive Guide to Military Monitoring*, see below.)

Once you have a scanner, the name of the game is finding the right frequencies. There is no lack of published sources for "Top Secret" military frequencies, but the information generally is not accurate for Groom Lake. Below are some frequencies to start with, mostly for aircraft control. They are published here without warrantee, but they were accurate last time we checked. The **boldface** denotes frequencies that can be picked up with a standard-issue scanner; others require a scanner that covers the 225-400 MHz military air band (usually the more expensive ones). Broadcast mode is AM unless specified. [See "Janet" flights in FLYING OBJECT IDENTIFIER for Groom Lake Tower frequencies.]

Nellis Control	**119.35**
Sally Corridor (along US-93)	343.0, **126.65**
Range #61 (S. of Tikaboo Valley)	320.1
Range #62 (S. of Range #61)	292.2
Range Air-to-Air	357.1, 289.3
Groom Lake VOR (Identifier "MCY")	**117.5**
Lincoln County Sheriff	**FM 154.86, FM 155.77**

These are the *published* frequencies. Any scanner buff ought to have his own jealously guarded "freaks" that he reveals only to other buffs who impress him with their trustworthiness.

Hand-off Sequence for "Janet" Flights: Las Vegas to Groom

121.9
McCarran Ground
⇓
119.9
McCarran Tower
⇓
133.95[16]
Departure Control
⇓
119.35
Nellis Control
⇓
?
Groom Approach
⇓
?
Groom Tower
⇓
?
Groom Ground

Groom Tower Frequencies. The frequencies used by the Groom Lake control tower for approaching and departing aircraft are in the civilian aircraft band (118-136 Mhz). We do not publish them here because previously the frequencies were changed as soon as they were widely published. You can find the frequencies yourself by tracing the hand-off frequencies of the "Janet" 737 jets leaving Las Vegas for Groom Lake.[17] The best place to do this would be a line-of-sight location like Tikaboo Peak, but certain areas of Highway 375, like Milepoint 32.3 or 34.6, would be almost as good for the aircraft's side of the broadcast. Tune to the Nellis Control frequency and listen for aircraft with the callsign "Janet." When you hear the controller say, "Frequency change approved," scan the other aircraft frequencies for the pick-up. You should expect a change of callsign here; the aircraft will call itself by another name and number. Due to the interest of radio buffs, the tower no longer uses the name "Dreamland," so you will know the tower frequency only by the timing of the pick-up to correspond with the hand-off from Nellis Control (and that you cannot identify the frequency as anything else).

The best general guide to intercepting military communications is *The Comprehensive Guide to Military Monitoring*, by Steve A. Douglass. This 280-page, large format book is packed with frequencies, code words, base profiles, and scanner buying advice for both the novice and advanced radio buff. Available for $19.95 (plus $4 postage) from: Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001. [See catalog.]

Frequency Counter. Hard core radio addicts can invest in a variety of heavy-duty electronic equipment

[16] Tower and departure frequencies may differ in the early morning hours when the two are often combined.

[17] There are about a dozen flights a day in each direction every weekday, starting at about 4:30 am and ending about 8:00 pm. (See Janet Flight in FLYING OBJECT IDENTIFIER.) You may find a schedule of these flights posted on our Area 51 Page on the internet. (See page 2.)

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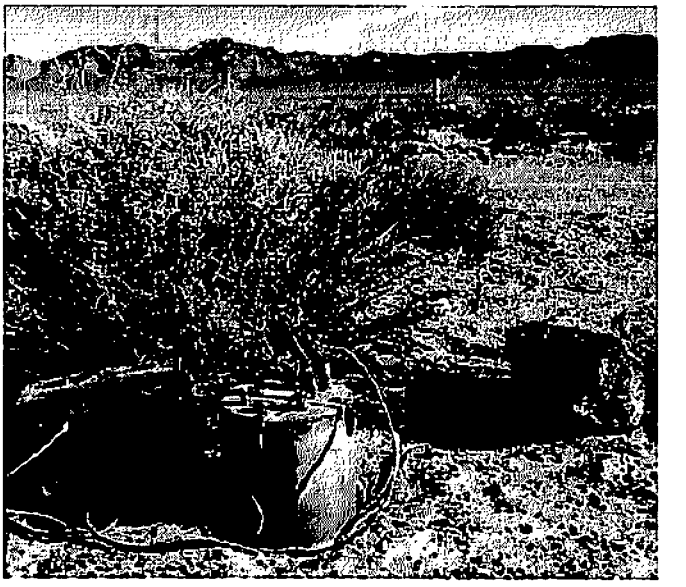
to home in on radio transmissions. One notable item is called a ***frequency counter***, which gives you a read-out of the frequency of any nearby transmitter so you can program it into your scanner. Models advertised in *Monitoring Times* run from $100 to $400. (I suggest the Optoelectronics M-1.)



Sensors. The border area has been a paradise of remote sensors, apparently laid out as a challenge to radio buffs. Unfortunately, the radio buffs apparently accepted the challenge and have stolen quite a few of them.[18] The most common kind is a magnetic sensor which detects cars passing on a dirt road. In this case, two detection units—plastic capsules about six inches long—are buried beside the road. They are connected by wire to a battery-powered transmitter a short distance away. The transmitter is usually about the size and shape of a gallon paint can and is gray in color to make it hard to spot. They are hidden beside roads on public land on nearly every dirt road that approaches the restricted zone (except the Groom Lake Rd.). They provide an "Easter Egg Hunt" for any radio buff interested in a challenge.

We suggest this technique for finding road sensors. Into your scanner, program two active channels, both of them the sensor frequency of 496.25. Put the radio in scan mode and make sure the antenna of the scanner is outside the window of the vehicle. When driving, if you hear a "click" and the scanner stops at 496.25, then stop the car immediately and check the bushes on the side of the road for the scanner transmitter. The transmitter is usually sitting behind a bush about 15 feet from the road.

"Cammo Dude" Freqs. Groom perimeter security patrols broadcasts on 418.05, 408.4, 170.5, 142.2 and 138.3 MHz and other frequencies. Transmissions are usually scrambled, but not always.

Summer Precautions

In the summer, it is important to bring a supply of water with you wherever you go and to keep drinking even if you are not thirsty. (Deaths like the one at right are almost always the result of lack of water.) Two one-gallon jugs of water would be a prudent amount to keep in your car. Aside from dehydration, the major concern here in the summer (and spring) is sunburn. Given the bright sun and high elevation, pale Caucasian bodies turn red quickly here. When you pass through a city, you may want to buy a bottle of sun block cream as this is currently unavailable in Rachel.

Make sure that your vehicle is well supplied with all its bodily fluids, too. Study your maps carefully and try not to drive anyplace you can't walk away from. If you travel only on paved roads or well traveled dirt roads, you do not have to go overboard on your desert preparations. Just make sure you have plenty of gas and water and that your spare tire is good. If you break down here, someone will be along sooner or later, and most drivers (except the Cammo Dudes) will stop if you flag them down in distress.[20]

Motorist's wrong turn ends in death

Former LV women stranded a week in desert

ST. GEORGE, Utah (AP) – A 63-year-old woman survived but her daughter died when they were stranded for a week on a desert road they thought was a shortcut to their new life in California.

"It was a nightmare. I couldn't live through it again," said Zora Jacobs from Dixie Regional Medical Center Tuesday.

Jacobs and her daughter, Janet Jacobs, 45, were heading for Potahuma, Calif., from St. George. Towing a moving trailer behind their car, the pair took a dirt road about 60 miles northeast of here, and got a flat tire on Aug. 29.

"We had a U-Haul and the road was so narrow we couldn't turn around," Jacobs said. "We had a spare, but we were on an incline ... we just didn't have the strength to fix it."

Zora Jacobs was rescued Sunday when hunters passing through the Delmar Mountains 2½ miles west of the Utah-Nevada border found the car, Lincoln County Sheriff Dahl Bradfield said.

The hunters took the women to a market in Santa Clara, Utah, and called the Washington County sheriff's office.

Bradfield said the two women apparently had been told they could save two hours of travel time by taking a shortcut. However, they took the wrong turn onto a jeep trail used by hunters and cattle ranchers, and ended up in Sawmill Canyon, near Lime Mountain. The temperatures ranged from 70s at night to 90s during the days.

The women had some canned food, and Janet Jacobs was able to walk to a spring a mile or two away two times, Bradfield said. She took water back to her mother.

Janet Jacobs apparently died Tuesday or Wednesday, the second or third day after they were stranded. An autopsy was to be performed today, Bradfield said.

The mother and daughter had moved to St. George from Las Vegas in March after their home was broken into and both were assaulted. The intruder raped and stabbed Janet Jacobs and broke her leg. Zora Jacobs suffered a broken pelvis.

Las Vegas Sun, Sept. 8, 1993

Vehicular Concerns

For the benefit of delusional New Yorkers and naive Europeans, I feel obligated to state the obvious: You need a car to visit this area. There is almost nothing resembling public transportation here, and even if you

[18] I strongly recommend against it, since these $50 units can cost the government up to $10,000, so you may be facing a serious federal theft charge if caught.

[19] Especially useful is a "French Foreign Legion" type hat to protect your neck from sunburn. You can make one yourself, without joining the Legion, by pinning a handkerchief to the back of a baseball cap.

[20] Except on Groom Lake Road where workers and security dudes will ignore you. Only other tourists will stop.

managed to hitchhike to Rachel, you would still need a car to go anyplace interesting. It seems that just about every month some UFO abductee from Manitoba or New Jersey calls up the Little A'Le'Inn[21] announcing that they have received a vision of imminent contact here and will be arriving in Rachel on the next Greyhound. The staff then has to describe to the caller the remoteness of the area and how you have to rent a car in Las Vegas and drive two and a half hours to get here. Typically, this is all too complicated for the abductee, who is never heard from again.

Cars can be rented at economical rates at the Las Vegas airport, where all the major rental agencies are represented. Reservations are important, since there are many unpredictable periods when cars sell out. Be sure to ask for unlimited mileage and try to get a car with cruise control. Renting a car is one of the rare circumstances when I recommend not seeking the cheapest deal. Instead of ordering an economical sub-compact Chevy Chevette or Geo Metro, I suggest springing for a full-size, gas guzzling behemoth, like a Chevy Caprice or Olds Cutlass Ciera. A full-size car is much easier to drive on dirt roads, and its wide seats and ample padding make it reasonably comfortable for one or two people to sleep in. Don't think of it as a hideous, oversized car, but as an economical land rover or compact RV. Mr. Alamo or Mr. Hertz are only concerned about dents and broken windows. They'll have no idea that you lived in their vehicle for a week or used up eight of its nine lives ploughing through the sagebrush.

When driving in this remote region, you must plan your gas purchases carefully. You won't find gas stations at every "town" shown on the map. Don't skimp on fuel at one outpost hoping you will find it cheaper at the next. "Top off" whenever you see gas available, especially if you are not certain of your itinerary.[22]

Otherwise, make sure your vehicle is in good condition before you come, since you are a long way from repair services should you break down. Be especially vigilant about your spare tire. The desert is full of sharp things, and flats are very common if you drive on dirt roads. When you rent a car, don't trust that it has a usable spare unless you inspect it yourself, because the previous driver may have changed out a flat and not told the rental agency. Make sure the spare is fully inflated and that the jack actually works, because a flat tire is your most likely and debilitating vehicle danger.

The second most likely cause of breakdown is getting stuck in sand or mud on a remote dirt road. Heavily used and well maintained access roads like Groom Lake Road and Valley Road are almost never a problem, but you need to exercise careful judgment on lessor used roads. A shovel is very useful should you get stuck; consider carrying one if you plan to do much back country driving.

Four Wheel Drive

Most casual visitors to this area will do fine with a regular sedan, prefereably a full-size rental car, but truly obsessed desert explorers need a four wheel drive. I have driven everything, and the primo vehicle, in my opinion, is a Toyota 4Runner. Other sport utility vehicles like the Ford Explorer and Chevy Blazer are fine for occasional off-road use, but they are really meant for suburban yups driving to and from the mall. Humvees, Land Rovers and Land Cruisers cannot go far beyond where the 4Runner can, and they so expensive that the only people who can afford them are movie stars and studio execs. This is one part of the world where you might actually use the four wheel drive feature, but you don't have to drive one to play. Several rental car companies in Las Vegas offer them for $50-$75/day. (See above.)

To the novice, a four wheel drive can be a dangerous device, like a loaded gun, because it gives you the power to do a lot of damage to yourself. Here is my capsule advice for using four wheel drives in the desert...

—If renting, always take the ***collision damage waiver***. Your credit card or home vehicle policies do not cover four wheel drives.

—Be absolutely certain you have ***everything you need to change a tire***. If you drive off-road, flats are very likely.

—It is a good idea to carry a ***portable electric air pump*** that plugs into a cigarette lighter. It will pump up slow leaks so you don't have to change the tire, and it could save your life if you have two flats and only one spare.

—Always carry at least a couple gallons of ***water***.

—Always carry a ***shovel***, preferably a full-size one. It will let you repair washed-out roads enough to let you pass.

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[21] In the days when I could visit there.

[22] The gas station in Rachel is open from 7am to 7pm daily. Gas is available 24 hours a day at Ash Springs.

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—A ***sledgehammer*** has gotten me out of several messes when making my own road across the sagebrush. Big rocks can be hiding behind innocuous-looking bushes. If your vehicle gets hung up on one of them, you could be in dire straights, but with the sledgehammer you can pulverize the rock. (Not needed if you stay on existing tracks.)

—Be very careful about driving ***sideways on a slope***. Your vehicle can handle steep slopes straight-on, but on its side it is much more likely to tip over than a regular car. Always look ahead when approaching a steep slope to make sure it won't put you in a situation where you you have to drive sideways. Backing up on a steep slope is also very frightening, so never charge up a hill unless you know how you are going to get down it again.

—If you find yourself in a pickle in which you have to drive on a slope on your side, ***study the problem*** a good long time before proceeding. You have to work with gravity, not against it, and the inertia of your vehicle exerts a gravity of its own. In some situations, if you stop you'll tip over, but if you move at a brisk pace you might make it through.

—Know your vehicle's ***limits***: angle of approach, angle of departure, etc. Experiment with what your vehicle can do *before* you get in jam.

—If you cannot clearly see the terrain in front of you, or you have any doubts about whether you vehicle can handle an obstacle, ***stop the car, and get out*** to inspect the area. Always understand the terrain before you drive over it. If any problems arise, take the time to collect data and think things through before you proceed.

—***Don't try to ford any stream*** until you have thoroughly inspected it. If you cannot see the bottom, wade through it and inspect it inch by inch.

—Your vehicle can usually handle sand, but ***avoid mud like the plague***. Even power to all four wheels won't give you any traction on slime.

—If you might be travelling on snow, always carry ***chains***.

—If heading into a remote area, always have a ***full tank of gas***.

—A ***cellular phone*** is a reassuring safety device. Even in seemingly remote areas, you can usually climb a hill and find a signal.

—Always carry a ***sleeping bag*** and enough warm clothing to spend the night. If you find yourself in a pickle late in the day, it may be a good idea to relax, spend the night and address the problem in the morning.

—If you drive on a remote road in an area you are not familiar with, always carry and appropriate ***map of the area***. Don't be afraid to knock on the door of a ranch house to inquire about the road ahead.

—Essential ***sundries***: toilet paper, asperin, flashlight, tow rope, binoculars.

—I carry a small ***come along*** (rachet winch) although I have never used it. The problem, if you get stuck, is finding something to attach the cable to. (For winches, get J.C. Whitney catalog, 312-431-6102.)

Maps

Good maps are essential equipment. They are absolutely required if you plan to do any back country driving, and they greatly enhance your visit even if you stay on paved roads. A basic state map is vital just to get you to 375. After you arrive, USGS topographic maps are more important. There are also many other kinds of maps available for this region: raised relief, air charts, aerial photos, etc. Although these are listed below, they are mainly of interest to map aficionados. For watching the skies around Area 51, only two maps are essential: the Nevada state highway map (free) and the USGS 1:100,000 "Pahranagat Range" map (about $4). The next most useful map is USGS 1:100,000 "Timpahute Range," followed by the big USGS Nevada state topographic map and then the Nevada Ghost Town map

Nevada Highway Map

The standard tourist map of Nevada is essential: It gives a wide view of Nevada highways and points out many highlights that would be lost on more detailed maps. It is available free from: Nevada Commission on Tourism, Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710. You can also request "general information on events and attractions" for a packet of glossy brochures. This map is also available for the asking at the information desks at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas or at one of the Nevada Welcome Centers near the state borders (off I-15 at Jean and Mesquite, or US-93 near Boulder City). It is important to have a compact highway map of the whole state, so if you can't find this free one you should buy a comparable Nevada road map at a convenience store.

USGS Topographic Maps

Published by the U. S. Geological Survey, official topographic maps are a gold mine of useful information. They show mountains and valleys, mines, towns, dry lakes, back roads, springs and the boundaries of government areas. These maps can be ordered directly from the government at: USGS Map Sales, P. O. Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225. You can request a "Topographic Map Index for Nevada" free of charge, and the maps themselves are inexpensive—between $2.50 and $6 each. The only trouble with ordering these maps directly from USGS is that they seem to take at least a month to fill any order, including a request for the index. The most popular maps of the area are also available from the Area 51 Research Center.

1:100,000 Series. The most useful USGS maps for this kind of terrain are the "1:100,000 Series." Each is folded and represents an area of approximately 35 miles by 55 miles. The state of Nevada is covered by 68 of these maps. The ones of interest to Area 51 watchers are "Pahranagat Range" (for most of the Groom Range, Groom Lake and Tikaboo Valley) and "Timpahute Range" (for the north end of the Groom Range, Rachel and Sand Spring Valley). These two cover the eastern two-thirds of Highway 375. The western end is found on "Cactus Flat" and "Warm Springs." The Map Portfolio at the end of this document contains an index of the 1:100,000 maps for Southern Nevada. If ordering from USGS, be sure to specify scale, state and map type, e.g. "Pahranagat Range, NV, 1:100,000 topographic." The USGS price for these maps is $4.00 each.

If ordering these or any other topographic maps from USGS, there is no shipping charge for orders totaling $10 or more. A handling fee of $1 must be added to orders of less than $10. Make check payable to "Dept. of Interior—USGS."

7-1/2 Minute Series. More detailed topographic maps are also available—called the "7-1/2 Minute Series"—but each shows such a small area of this vast landscape (about 7 by 8 miles) that it isn't very useful for general touring. For example, the 7-1/2 Minute map for Groom Lake ("Groom Mine") simply shows an empty dry lake taking up a large portion of the sheet, and the detail of surrounding roads and contours is only moderately better than the 1:100,000 series. The only time the extra detail might be useful is when you are climbing a mountain, visiting a ghost town or studying some other specific land feature on foot or 4WD. Each of these maps is $2.50 from USGS.

Topographic State Map. An even wider scale map is the huge Nevada state map. At nearly 4 feet by 5-1/2 feet, it can be hard to handle, but it contains a lot of detail for the money, only $4. If you can find a way to fold it, this map can serve as a detailed road atlas of the state. Order "Nevada State Map 1:500,000 topographic," and expect a five-foot box to arrive.

Satellite Imagery

If you really want to go whole hog into the spy business, you could try to get all the best intelligence the U.S. Government can provide. For information on ordering LandSat satellite imagery, write to: EROS Data Center, Sioux Falls, SD 57198. Request "information on ordering satellite and aerial imagery of Southern Nevada." LandSat images of the Groom and Papoose Lake areas have recently become available again after being blacked out during the Cold War. Positive or negative transparencies run about $12 to $18 each.

LandSat imagery isn't state of the art, however. Nominal resolution is a dismal 30 meters, enough to show the nonexistent Groom airstrip and block of hangers but little more. Military spy satellites offer resolution better then one meter, but the U.S. military doesn't release this imagery—"national security." So what is a spy to do? If the U.S. Government will not sell you the satellite photos you want, who will? Who you gonna call? Why, the Russians, of course! In this Brave New World where everything is for sale, the former Soviets are happy to provide you with detailed military satellite imagery of anyplace you want, with accuracy far greater than publicly available from any Western source. The only catch is, the Russian photos are expensive. One of Groom Lake was sold recently for about $1900. (That's for a high quality negative. Paper prints have been sold for $500 or less.) It is the sort of thing you have to negotiate and sign a contract for, but if you have the money to burn on something like this, you can contact the U.S. agents for Russian imagery: Space Liaison International, 11440 W. Bernardo Ct., Suite 300, San Diego, CA 92127 or Central Trading, Houston, Texas. French satellite imagery is available from Spot Image Corp., 1897 Preston White Drive, Reston, VA 22091. Please don't bother these people unless you have a couple grand in your pocket and are serious about purchasing satellite imagery.

Aeronautical Charts

These are maps published for civilian pilots by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. Each "Sectional Aeronautical Chart" is a 1:500,000 shaded-relief base map overprinted with

[23] See the Tonopah airstrip on the Cactus Flat 1:100,000 Satellite Image Map.

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technical info on airspace restrictions, navigation beacons, air corridors, etc. The Black Mailbox and vicinity are covered by the "Las Vegas Sectional." Apart from Las Vegas itself, most of the airspace on this chart is blocked off as "Restricted" or "Military Operations Area." This chart acknowledges no airfields or buildings at Groom or Papoose lakes, but it does show some roads in the vicinity.

Except under limited circumstances civilian pilots may not fly in Restricted military airspace, which begins in the Tikaboo Valley a few miles east of the Restricted Area on the ground. Pilots understand that if they wander into this airspace, they will be prosecuted.[24] Civilian pilots *are* allowed to fly in Military Operations Areas (MOA's), like Desert MOA covering the airspace over Rachel and Tikaboo Valley, they are advised to contact "Nellis Control" before entering. Some visitors have asked whether it would be possible to fly a small plane just outside the Restricted Zone and peer in from there. The local pilots I have talked to say, yes, it is possible, and occasionally light planes are seen near Rachel skirting the Dreamland boundaries. The only trouble is that the bumpy ride makes it hard to use binoculars or telephoto lens, and what you can see with the naked eye is limited.

The Las Vegas Sectional can be ordered for $6.00 postpaid from NOAA Distribution Branch N/CG33, National Ocean Service, Riverdale, MD 20237, (301) 436-6990. NOAA is fairly prompt in filling orders, and they accept credit card orders by phone. You can request a free catalog of US air charts. The Las Vegas Sectional is also available for $6.75 at the Signature Flight Support booth at the Executive Air Terminal at McCarran Airport[25] or at pilot supply shops at your local airport.

Defense Mapping Agency

DMA publishes a big, colorful map of the entire Restricted Area. The Restricted Area is shown divided up into coded sectors, but the designations "51" and "S-4" do not appear. The title of the map is "Nellis AFB Range Chart," and it is widely circulated among visiting military personnel and civilian contractors. Although this map is unclassified, I have been unable to locate this map for public sale. The stock number for this map is NRCXX01. (It is not available from NOAA, but you may file a FOIA for it from DMA.[26])

Other DMA charts for the area are available from the same NOAA address as for civilian aeronautical charts, for $4.00 each. They can be ordered by phone: (301) 436-6990. The following military air charts are of interest:

JOG-NJ119: This chart, at a scale of 1:250,000, shows the area around Groom Lake. This is the only government air chart available to the public that indicates a runway there, although no information is given except heading.

TPC-G18R: This big chart, at a scale of 1:500,000, shows a broad area of the southwest, including the Nellis Range and the airspaces around Edwards AFB. [Thanks to J.W. and P.M.]

Raised Relief Maps

These are maps you can feel. Each is USGS Army Series map printed on a sheet of plastic which is molded as the land is formed. You can't carry these around in your pocket, but if you are stuck at home, it is the next best thing to being there. The Caliente map covers the Black Mailbox, Groom & Papoose Lakes and Rachel. Order from Hubbard Scientific, P.O. Box 760, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729, (800) 446-8767. The Caliente map is item number "NY 11-9-1" and runs about $20.

BLM Maps

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management sells a number of maps regarding land use. For the most part these are USGS 1:100,000 base maps (without contours) overprinted in pretty colors indicating who owns or controls the land. They are available at the BLM offices in Caliente and Las Vegas, or you can order them from USGS as "Surface Management" maps. (Listed in the USGS Nevada index.)

For the most part, these maps are dull. However, the surface management map for Pahranagat Range is the only available USGS map that acknowledges a base at Groom Lake—apparently because this map predates the 1984 land seizure. The map shows a long airstrip and a network of roads, circa 1978. The Groom Lake portion of this map is reproduced in the Map Portfolio at the end of this document. If you want to order it yourself, it is available from USGS as "Pahranagat Range NV 1:100,000 Surface Management" for $4. (Use the same address as for topographic maps.)

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[24] The contention that intruding aircraft will be shot down is as yet unproven because there aren't many pilots who are willing to test this.

[25] The Executive Air Terminal is the civil aviation terminal on Las Vegas Blvd., south of Tropicana—not to be confused with the main passenger terminal on the other side of the airport or the commuter terminal next door.

[26] Address it to: Information and Privacy Office, Defense Mapping Agency, 8613 Lee Highway, Fairfax, VA 22031-2137. See Desert Rat #21 and #23.

Nevada State Atlas

The only general purpose atlas of Nevada is published by the state Department of Transportation. It is a 8-1/2" x 11" book containing 170 maps, covering the entire state at a scale of 1:250,000. Unfortunately, the information on these maps is very limited: Just roads, water features and government boundaries. Topographic information, such as mountain ranges and elevation contours, is almost entirely absent. This is a very poor atlas and not an essential item, but it is relatively cheap and better than having no detailed map at all when traveling beyond your USGS topographic coverage. This atlas also provides a cross-check for some topo map data, especially dirt roads that may have changed since the last USGS map was issued. (Most of the maps in this atlas were prepared in the 1980s, while some USGS maps are much older.)

The "Nevada Map Atlas" is available for $12.00 postpaid, from: Nevada Dept. of Transportation, Map Section—Room 206, 1263 S. Stewart St., Carson City, NV 89712. Mercury Blueprint in Las Vegas also carries the atlas for $15.00.

Nevada Ghost Town Map

This is a good resource to help fill your idle days between saucer watches. It gives the locations of hundreds of ghost towns and tries to specify the back roads to get from a paved highway to each. You'll probably still need a USGS map for reference, since the small size of the ghost town map makes it difficult to locate access roads. The presence on the map of a ghost town and road to it does not necessary mean you can get there from here. For example, the mining camp of Groom is shown on the map (at a mine on the mountainside above Groom Lake), but it is within the Restricted Area and not accessible to the public. Also, don't expect most ghost towns to look like Hollywood movie sets; in most cases, all you will find are foundations, debris and some mine workings, but there could be some surprises, too, like an intact bank building or some vintage vehicles. Ghost towns are the places to be especially careful about mine shafts and tunnels, which usually riddle the hills around town. This map is available for $3.50 from Area 51 Research Center. [See catalog.]

Land Use

For the most part, Nevada is controlled by the Federal Government. Although commercial and residential land in inhabited areas is usually privately owned, most of the outback is owned or managed by one government agency or another. Portions not controlled by the military, the Forest Service, the Park Service or the state are usually managed by the Bureau of Land Management, or BLM, who leases specific usage rights to farmers, ranchers and miners. In the vicinity of 375, BLM controls most of the land just outside of the Restricted Zone. It is an important political point that BLM does not "own" the land; it only manages it on behalf of the public, so you and I have as much right to use it as anyone. It is generally accepted that you have a reasonable right to travel and camp on this land. However, the rancher who leases the resources also has a reasonable right to protect his livelihood. It is not always clear what your exact legal rights are on leased land, but "rights" are not the main issue. A more important concern should be courtesy.

Consider this: How would you feel about a crowd of strangers camping out in front of your mailbox every week, tearing up your backyard with four-wheel drives, accusing you of being a government agent and peering in your bedroom windows with telescopes and binoculars? Such are the indignities suffered by the Medlins, who operate the ranch in the Tikaboo Valley. UFO watchers, in their fevered pursuit of aliens, often have a complete disregard for the human beings who live and work here. The merchants of Rachel are happy to have you visit, but the local ranchers gain nothing from your presence and see you only as an annoyance.

This land is big enough that watchers and ranchers can coexist peacefully. All that is necessary for the relationship to work is for the watchers to follow a few rules of common courtesy. In particular, you should stay as far away as possible from the Medlin ranch compound and all ranch operations. People's "backyards" are big around here, so anything closer than a mile to a residence or workplace might be considered a breach of privacy.

Camping

You do not need any permit to camp on most BLM land. Essentially, if you have an RV, tent or sleeping bag, you can live on public land rent free, subject only to the minor provision that you can stay no more than 14 days in one location per month. Campfires are generally allowed. Aside from commonsense restrictions concerning littering, fires and damage to the land, the stay limit seems to be the only significant issue BLM is

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concerned about, even if you are camping on the edge of the Restricted Zone. BLM is the custodian of the land, not the Air Force, but don't be surprised if the security patrols spend the night watching you or skulking around just beyond your campsite. That is within their rights, too.

Personally, I sleep like a baby when camped near the border. I often do it alone, and do not have the slightest fear for my safety.

Although nearly all BLM land near SR-375 is a potential campground, you may want to choose a spot that offers some privacy. For hidden drive-in camping spots along 375 where no one will even know you are there, try LN 31.7 (best), LN 21.8, LN 11.7, NY 47.8, 0.7 N of NY 45.7 (good view) and Groom Lake Road Mile 4.3 (from LN 34.6). [See MILEPOST LOG for details.]

The "Cammo Dudes"

If you stay close to the paved highway, it is likely you will never encounter any kind of military or civilian authority. If the Sheriff stops you on the paved road, it probably concerns a routine traffic problem. Just as on other highways, the authorities are not happy with you parking immediately adjacent to the pavement of the highway, especially at night. Pull into a gravel parking area or some other off-highway location mentioned in the Milepost Log. Sheriff's Department employees, although unable to grasp the higher concepts of law, are almost always decent and courteous and are usually easy to get along with in routine matter.

If you leave the paved highway and approach the Restricted Area, you may encounter less outgoing authorities. Whether or not it has alien technology in its possession, the military obviously does not want people intruding into its secret base. Signs in the area warn, "Use of Deadly Force Authorized," and it would be unwise to test this hypothesis. Realistically, watchers have been arrested and given $600 fines for intruding into the Zone and have been menaced with helicopters just for approaching, but, legally, the security force is not supposed to interfere with your movements outside the Restricted Zone.

The dirt roads around the perimeter of the Restricted Zone are patrolled by well armed two-man teams in white four-wheel-drive Jeep Cherokees[28], unmarked except for stenciled government plates and usually with a light bar on top. Officially, these guards do not exist, but the word on the street says they are employed by the EG&G Corporation under military contract, with managment positions occupied by Air Force personnel. Since their employer is unconfirmed, we just call them the "Cammo Dudes," after their camouflage fatigues.

Although the Cammo Dudes rarely make contact with visitors and have no legal authority outside the Restricted Zone, they have been rumored to exercise various questionable techniques to remove people from areas that are legally public. Black Mailbox folklore is full of security encounters, with many themes repeated. Below, I have divided these encounters into two groups: those that I can personally attest to and those that I hear only from other sources, some more reliable than others.

Confirmed Encounters

The most easily confirmed stories—and the ones that I have experienced myself—record four kinds of security encounters outside the restricted zone...

A Visit from the County Sheriff. This is the most common kind of close encounter on the dirt roads near the Restricted Zone. At security's telephoned request, a uniformed Deputy Sheriff drives in from Alamo, asks for ID's and advises you politely about the military's concerns—usually regarding crossing the border or using cameras near it. If the security patrol is present, they usually stay in their vehicle at a respectable distance and let the Sheriff do the talking. Aside from conveying the military's warnings, the Deputy is primarily concerned with three relatively minor points of state law which are a genuine issue in this area: (1) that you not park with 100 yards of a cattle water trough, (2) that you not park on the roadway or immediate shoulder of a paved or maintained dirt road, and (3) that you not litter or cause obvious damage to property or land. Otherwise, as far as the Sheriff is concerned, you are pretty much free to do what you want here.

After his visit with you, the deputy usually drives down the road and into the restricted zone himself, apparently to report his findings to security. It seems highly likely that your name and address will be relayed to security. Recently, while the number of visitors has been increasing rapidly, visits by the Sheriff seem to be increasingly rare and are now usually limited to when people actually cross the border and are caught.

Low level aircraft. Many people climbing White Sides and hiking near the border (including myself) have reported very close encounters with big military helicopters, apparently called up especially for the

[27]From a passage from the Federal Register available at the Caliente BLM office. (Federal Register, Vol. 53, No. 165, Aug. 25, 1988, page 32472.)
[28]The legendary tan colored Broncos and Blazers were replaced in July or August 1993 with a new fleet of easy-to-spot white Cherokees.

occasion. In one case, I and aviation writer Jim Goodall, were seriously sandblasted by a Black Hawk[29] helicopter, on public land far from any vantage point.[30] Observations on later occasions indicate that "sandblasting" was still a routine technique used by the helicopter pilots to smoke out watchers hiding in the bushes on public land, but after the recent waves of publicity, the helicopter has kept its distance.

Following on Foot. While hiking or camping near the border, I and my companions have sometimes been followed on foot by the Cammo Dudes. On one occasion, while I and two journalists were hiking back from Freedom Ridge, we came over some rocks and were surprised to find a man in camouflage fatigues sitting behind them. Apparently he had been following us and watching from a distance. He was a guy in his 20s or early 30s, with binoculars around his neck but no obvious offensive equipment. He asked what we were doing out here, and I said we were just looking down on the secret base, what was *he* doing here? He shrugged and said he was counting antelope. I suggested that maybe he was bird watching, and he said, yes, that was it. One of the reporters wanted to question the man at length, but I called him off saying he shouldn't embarrass the poor fellow. We parted amicably, and none in our party felt at all intimidated by the encounter.

If the Dudes wanted to be stealthy, their camouflage fatigues can make them almost impossible to see unless you stumble upon them as we did. At night, they may be wearing night vision goggles. These guys are not omniscient and probably won't leave their vehicles most of the time, but they could check you out on foot if they are not clear of your intentions. Whenever you are anywhere near the border, you should never assume that you are not being watched.

A Friendly "Need any help?" If you are sitting in your car parked near the Restricted Zone, don't be surprised if the guys in the Cherokee drive up and say, "Hi!" They could be friendly! Their most common line is something like, "Having any trouble?" or "Need any help?" On my first encounter of this type, we chatted for a couple of minutes, and one of them even told me his hometown—Palmer, Mass.—an unprecedented release of personal information that he will probably now get in trouble for. I asked who they worked for, and they said, "a civilian entity." I commented on how they weren't the nasty people they were supposed to be. They assured me they weren't and said that if I needed any help of any kind, I should just flag them down. They left me, then, but did not go very far. I started climbing White Sides, and they immediately called the Sheriff.[31]

In another encounter, a Cammo Dude with a cigar and big clipboard (clearly a member of management) met three companions and myself at Groom Lake Road as we returned from Freedom Ridge. He asked for our IDs and to look in our packs, and we complied (although we knew we didn't have to). Then he talked with us for a while. When I introduced myself, he said he had read my *Viewer's Guide*, purchased for him by the government. He said his only objection to it was that it provided too much information, which could be used by the wrong kind of people (who he did not further specify). One report in my book that he said he found particularly amusing was the claim that they shot out the tires of visitors. He said that even their four wheel drives got flat tires all the time in this rugged terrain. Regarding UFOs, this Cammo Dude pointed out that there was no way they could win on this one no matter what they did. Even if they opened up the whole restricted area to public tours, no one would believe they hadn't taken the aliens elsewhere.

Lies. Even if you traveling on public land where you have every right to be, there is nothing to prevent a guard from lying to you about the law. They could tell you that the military controls the land you are on and that if you don't leave immediately you will be arrested. Lies are less common around Groom than it used to be, due to the power of publicity. Now it is more common at less visited bases like the Tonopah Test Range. Guards may hold their weapons at the ready without actually pointing them and say that the military owns "most of this land" without being more specific. The best antidote for such intimidation is to know the rules yourself and recite them calmly without trying to make a federal case of it.

Unconfirmed Encounters

The security encounters below are based on Black Mailbox folklore—in other words, on secondhand testimony or the published claims of people I do not know. I have no direct experience with these tactics myself and cannot say whether they are true, but I think it important to list them anyway because it is better to be overprepared for what might happen than underprepared. I fully acknowledge that there could be a strong mythological content to these stories, since every adventurer recounting his exploits wants to make the threat sound as ominous as possible, thus emphasizing his own bravery in standing up to it. It is also possible that if any such incidents did occur, they may not have happened here, at the border of Area 51, but elsewhere along

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[29] Aviation buffs refer to it more precisely as a Pave Hawk MH-60G.

[30] On June 16, 1993 near Southwest Corner.

[31] This was back in the days when they called the Sheriff routinely whenever anyone started up the mountain.

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the edge of the Restricted Zone or a long time ago, before Area 51 became a household name.

Pointing guns at you and telling you to leave. This theme recurs again and again in Black Mailbox folklore, apparently occurring when security wants to remove you quickly from a public place without waiting for the Sheriff. Some stories[32] suggest that there might be *a lot* of guns pointed at you by a small army of ominous military types wearing camouflage outfits and night vision goggles. However, since the number of guns tends to increase with each telling, it is hard to know where reality begins and ends in these stories. In any case, having even one gun pointed at you is enough to get the message across. A tactical retreat would be in order, but not a surrender. That any gun at all should be pointed at you outside the Restricted Zone suggests an element of panic, as though there really was something sensitive going on at that particular time and they didn't want you getting too close.

Verbal threats. More subtle than the actual use of force is the gentle art of threatening to break your bones if you do not depart immediately. This sort of thing is said to happen if you encounter a security patrol blocking the road. You ask if you can pass, and they say no. You ask why, and they come up with some creative, Mafia-style advice about the importance of remaining healthy. Although there is no evidence of such threats being carried out, it would be unwise to call the bluff, since the relationship can only degenerate into the guns-in-your-face form of persuasion. Again, a tactical retreat would be in order.

Shooting out tires. Some visitors approaching the Restricted Zone have reported mysterious flat tires immediately after passing a security patrol parked beside the road.[33] The evidence is circumstantial, but on these remote and rugged roads, with thorns, sharp rocks and needles everywhere, a flat tire is likely *anyway* and is a threat not to be taken lightly. Make sure your spare tire is in good condition and that you have all the hardware you need to change it. If you did suspect that someone had deliberately damaged your tire, by all means save the tire as evidence and file a complaint with the Sheriff to at least put it on the record.

Gassing. In an article in UFO Magazine[34], a group of visitors spending the night on Campfire Hill suggest that they might have been gassed by security personnel to keep them unconscious overnight. I am highly skeptical of this one, and the evidence, again, is circumstantial. It is hard to say what you can do to protect yourself if it were true. At least you'll get a good night's sleep.

Arrest. The fact that security forces have limited legal authority and no supportable charge against you might not necessarily prevent them from detaining you. At least it gets you out of the way for a few hours if you are proving to be an irritation to them, and it certainly could rattle those visitors who are not prepared for it.

Black Mailbox folklore must be taken with a grain of salt, but it should not be dismissed lightly either. For example, the suggestion of electronic sensors in every Joshua tree seems far-fetched, but other stories of surveillance deserve some consideration. We can confirm various kinds of mundane sensors like solar power television cameras just inside the border and magnetic trip sensors along dirt roads on public land. [See Radio section.] Other kinds of electronic surveillance is speculative and is limited only by the imagination. Much debate has also centered on the purpose of the small structure visible through binoculars on the top of Bald Mountain. Is it a simple radar dome or an Orwellian surveillance device? Neither possibility should be discounted. It would be neither difficult nor illegal for the military to mount a powerful video camera up there beside the radar dome so they could zoom in on anything going on in the valley below.

Can they also *hear* everything that goes on in this valley? Technically, it may be possible, but now we are descending into the realm of paranoia. Is the Little A'Le'Inn bugged? Is that highway worker really a government spy? Paranoia breeds well along SR-375 because if you start to believe any of the flying saucer stories then there's no telling what else the government or aliens might be up to. If you look for spies behind ever rock, transmitters under every lampshade and alien impostors behind every set of eyes, you'll soon go mad, so it is best not to give it a second thought. Paranoid thoughts of surveillance and persecution are best addressed by this maxim: If you say and do nothing you are not proud of, then you have nothing to hide.

If You Cross the Line

It seems that every few months, a new "Keep Out" sign appears at the point where Groom Lake Road crosses into the Restricted Area. [See LN 34.6.] Once there were only two signs, but that has grown to at least

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[32] Told by "the Modern Munchausen" Sean Morton.

[33] Specifically, Richard Boylan says this happened to him on Groom Lake Road. See his *Mufon Journal* article in REFERENCES.

[34] "Strange Camp-Out at Area 51." See REFERENCES.

[35] Phone (702) 725-3375.

six. The signs offer every conceivable creative variation on the theme, "Keep Out," but there are still some naive travelers who insist on driving past the signs and up to the guard house about 1/4 mile away. If you do this, you will be arrested immediately without being given an opportunity to try out that convenient excuse you were working on. Arrest means "against the wall with your feet spread", probably handcuffs and certainly a whole lot of paperwork and inconvenience. The usual fine is $600, although the theoretical maximum is $5000 or a year in jail while some people have gotten away with paying only $35. More disturbing about these encounters than the money is the realization, once you are arrested, that you have no rights here. No civilian police have authority beyond the border, and the guards you are dealing with do not officially exist. For all practical purposes, you have left United States territory and its citizen protections. If any harm befell you here, any investigation that took place would be strictly at the convenience of the military.

SUBJECT: Order Not To Enter Or Reenter Military Reservation

TO: [redacted]

1. You are being removed as a trespasser from this installation, a military reservation, and ordered not to reenter the confines of this instation without the written permission of the Commander or an officer designated by him to issue a permit of reentry.

2. Your attention is invited to 18 U.S.C 1382, entitled: Entering Military, Naval or Coast Guard Property, which states:

> "Whoever within the jurisdiction of the United States, goes upon a military, Naval or Coast Guard Reservation post, fort, arsenal, yard, station or installation, for any purpose prohibited by law or lawful regulation; or whoever reenters or is found within any such reservation, post, fort, arsenal, yard, station or installation after having been removed therefrom or ordered not to reenter by any officer or person in command or charge thereof shall be fined not more than $500.00 or imprisoned not more than six months or both.
> June 25, 1948 - C.645, 02 Stat, 765."

James W. Hutchinson

JAMES W. HUTCHINSON, Lt Col, USAF
Installation Commander

I certify that the original of this letter was given to the addressee on [redacted] at [redacted].
DATE TIME

[redacted]
SIGNATURE OF LETTER ISSUER

Acknowledge Receipt with signature below.

[redacted]
SIGNATURE OF ADDRESSEE/RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGE

I once had an opportunity to interview one of those naive travelers a few hours after his visit to the guard house. He was not a saucer nut but a ghost town buff in search of the lost Groom Mine at the south end of the Groom Range. He was arrested immediately upon arrival at the guard house, and he sensed that this procedure was a matter of routine, not a subject for negotiation. The suspect was turned over to the Sheriff at the border, and a fine of $500 plus a $100 administrative fee was levied against him by the County for misdemeanor trespass. This was eventually reduced to $35 total, apparently for good behavior. Before he left the guard house and was turned over to the Sheriff, my informant was required to sign three documents. He was not "asked" to sign them; he was "told" to, and most people would not want to be uncooperative knowing the maximum penalty for intrusion.

The first document was the one on the right. It is based on a 1948 statute and mentions only a $500 fine. (This is probably only one of several statutes that could apply.)

The second document was simply a form that had been filled out with all of the personal information the guards could possibly obtain from the offender: home address, social security number, car registration, etc.

The third document was more sinister. It was about two pages long, and after my informant signed it, he was not allowed to have a copy. He could not recall exactly what it said, but it concerned "intentional or accidental exposure to classified information" and was based on a relatively recent statute, probably from the 1980s.[36] We suspect that it is similar to the one at right, which came to me from another source.

OATH UPON INADVERTENT EXPOSURE TO CLASSIFIED SECURITY DATA OR INFORMATION

I fully understand that my inadvertent exposure to classified security data or information relative to the United States subjects me to the provisions of Title 18, Sections 793-798 of the United States Code, inclusive, and, if I am subject to military jurisdiction, provisions of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. I am aware that the punishment for certain of the above references statutes can be imprisonment for any term of years or for life.

I do therefore solemnly swear or affirm that I shall never divulge, publish, or reveal, either by word, conduct, or any other means, the content of substance of the classified security data or information of which I have become aware. Only written official notice of specific authorization will release me from this obligation.

I further understand that no change in my assignment, employment, residence, or citizenship will ever relieve me of my responsibilities under this oath, except as defined above.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS | DATE

TITLE/ORGANIZATION | NAME (PRINTED)/SSAN

SIGNATURE

TITLE/ORGANIZATION

PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

This form is affected by the Privacy Act of 1974. AUTHORITY: 10 USC 8012 AND EO 9397.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: To record information on individuals who have inadvertently been exposed to classified security data or information relative to the United States Government.

ROUTINE USE: Affirms intent to safeguard information which could damage national security and to inform individuals of penalties under the Espionage Laws (Title 18, USC, Sections 793 through 798) and the UCMJ.

SSAN: Is necessary to verify identity of signator.

Security Reads This Book

One final note regarding security personnel: Since this *Viewer's Guide* is a public document available to anyone who wants to buy it, the security people are reading it just like you. (Indeed, it may be *required* reading.) I know this for a fact, because one of the Cammo Dudes, the one with the cigar, told me that the government had bought it for them and that he had read it. I can only approve. Every one of

[36] The "Secretary Act" was one phrase my informant recalled.

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those white Cherokees should have one in the glove compartment, and I encourage the occupants to send me their comments and corrections. Given their access to this book and the fact that they work here full time and probably know every nook and cranny anyway, it is silly to speak in code and pretend that you are bird watching. I suggest being open and direct about what you are doing. In a way, being loud, clumsy and obvious may be more unnerving to the government than sneaking around like a spy. Remember, this supposed to be a *secret* base—*shhhh!* Your power lies not in your special knowledge but in showing up at unexpected times and in inconvenient places. There is merit in going "stealth" on some occasions, but if you meet the patrol on the road, I see nothing wrong with telling them what you are up to: that you are hunting for secret airplanes or flying saucers and welcome their advice.

Safety

These items have been stated before but bear repeating...

Serious Beef. The most dangerous hazard on Route 375 is not alien spacecraft or U.S. security forces, but terminal encounters of the bovine kind. Since most of the highway is open range, stock wander freely across the road. Cattle are most dangerous at night when you can't see them until just before impact. Drive slowly and keep alert. Even in the day you should not become complacent. As one Rachel resident explained to me, "They got black ones for the night and tan ones for the day." The little ones pose a special risk: If Baby is on one side of the road and Mama is on the other, Junior could make a mad dash toward Mom as a car approaches. The final insult of colliding with one of these beasts is that after your car is totaled and your front teeth knocked out, you are required by law to pay for the animal. (Please don't hit and run. It's a great loss to the rancher, and your insurance should pay.)

Cattle are no laughing matter: These animals are *dumb*. They stand in the middle of the road. Sometimes they *sit* in the road. They look death squarely in the eye and chew their cud. One can see how they would be the subject of choice for lazy alien biologists: Cattle are easy to spot, easy to catch, easy to work on, and *they* don't have to pay for the animal.

Desert Nasties. The desert is supposed to be full of nasty things that slither, bite and sting, but I have run into very few (aside from human ones in Vegas). Still, desert critters should be a concern if you walk through the brush at night. Day or night, it is always a good idea to walk slowly and carefully. If nothing else, the desert contains a vast tonnage of manure you may care to avoid, not to mention an occasional unmarked mine shaft you definitely want to stay clear of.

Rattlesnake Bite Victims

The LA Times reports the following statistics for rattlesnake bites.[37]

- The vast majority of people bitten are men between the ages of 17 and 27.
- 85% of all bites are on the hand or arm; only 10% occur on the foot or lower leg.
- In more that 30% of the cases, the victim is drunk.
- 20% of victims have tattoos.

One can infer from the above that the best way to avoid being bitten by a rattlesnake is to not act like a young, drunk, tattooed male. The fact that most bites occur on the arms and hands suggests they are most likely to happen when you are clamoring over rocks, poking around underneath things or deliberately teasing the animal.

Rattlesnakes are probably the only animal threat worth thinking about, and there are very few here compared to desert lowlands. People who work outside near Rachel say that they see a rattlesnake only about once or twice a year, and I have seen only two in my time here. Rattlesnakes are shy critters that will do their best to avoid you if you give them a chance. Your best defense is to move slowly and not put your feet or hands anyplace you can't see clearly. If bitten, the *Desert Survival Handbook* [See References.] offers this advice:

> If you get bitten by a venomous snake and cannot get professional medical attention, your best bet is to make every attempt to remain calm, drink plenty of water and seek professional treatment as quickly as possible. Do not rush around—that will increase the circulation of venom in your bloodstream. Tourniquets and cut-and-suck kits are no longer recommended.

Scorpions are relatively common in dark places, but the varieties found here are only an annoyance, not a serious threat. Unless you are allergic to bee stings, the scorpion's sting hurts a lot but isn't dangerous and usually requires no special medical attention.

Abandoned Mines. The tunnels and shafts of old mines are potential deathtraps. There are some 10,000 derelict mines in the state, most of them unsealed and unmarked. If you encounter a tunnel in a hillside, don't go inside. The dangers are collapsing floors and poisonous gas, not unlike an Indiana Jones movie. A few "hard rock" mine tunnels might be reasonably safe, but don't take the chance unless you know what you are doing. In flat areas, open mine shafts on the desert floor give you an opportunity to plunge to your death in a place where no one will ever find your body. Tunnels and shafts are usually quite obvious on the landscape, surrounded by tailings and clutter, but they could sneak up on you if you run, drive or bike off-road during the day or trek through the desert on nights without a moon.

[37] "Snakebite Season." Date unknown, 1993. Statistics come from the LA area so may not reflect reality. [Thanks to S.B.]

Unmaintained Dirt Roads. If you choose to leave the paved highway, don't take on rougher roads than your vehicle can handle. As Clint Eastwood would say (before blowing away the overconfident bad guy): "A man's got to know his limitations." If you get stuck out here, help is going to be far, far away. If the road gets rough, slow down and don't hesitate to turn back. Even if the road is in good condition, don't be lulled into driving great distances from civilization. Until you understand the terrain and have some desert driving experience, a good rule of thumb is, Don't drive any further from a paved road than you are prepared to walk back.

There are some lessons of dirt road driving that come with experience. If you hit a sand trap, don't slow down and don't hit the gas; just keep moving ahead at a brisk and steady pace; if you brake or try to gun your way out, you are more likely to get mired. Contrary to intuition, it is best to drive at a swift pace on very sandy roads to avoid getting stuck. At a certain sublime speed, somewhere between 40 and 60 mph, your vehicle seems to float above the sand, with the only inconvenience being the almost complete inability to steer. This is where driving becomes an art form, as you navigate that fine line between smooth sailing and dead meat.[38]

If a road has a hump along the middle of it, as many here do, you can avoid scraping bottom by driving on the edge of the road with one set of wheels on the hump. Try to avoid dirt roads if any kind of wet weather threatens or has recently taken place; mud traps and flash flooding are common and could strand you miles from anywhere. Even after the weather has passed, keep in mind that some maintained dirt roads can remain impassable for days or weeks, while unmaintained dirt roads might never be repaired unless you bring a shovel and do it yourself.

If you choose to drive on dirt roads, you should have a prudent fear of getting lost on them. There are usually no road signs and no neighbors you can ask for directions. Avoid long journeys on unpaved roads unless you have a good topographic map, and even then, keep in mind that many roads are not shown on any map while others that are shown have long since been washed away or absorbed into the sagebrush. Even the best topographic maps do not depict very well the quality of dirt roads, whether suitable for passenger cars, 4WD or high clearance only. If you leave the paved road, you will probably get lost sooner or later, so be prepared: Note the way you came in and bring plenty of essential supplies like water and a full tank of gas.

The above warnings given, a "maintained" dirt road—that is, one that looks like it has been recently bulldozed—is generally safe for travel by all vehicles. The county looks after many of these roads (including the access roads to Groom Lake) and grades them annually. The ride can often be nearly as smooth as a paved road, and the fact that the road is maintained usually indicates that other people use it frequently and could possibly help you if you have a problem. The greater dangers are on unmaintained dirt roads, where unpredictable hazards can easily disable your vehicle and where it might be months before someone happens along to collect your bones. These are the roads you need to think twice about using, and exercise great caution on if you do.

Ethical Rules for Watchers

Three rules of ethics should be observed when hunting for UFOs—or when searching for anything else for that matter.

#1: Tread lightly. Drive only on existing roads. Do not litter, damage abandoned buildings or harm the wildlife. Do not irritate the locals or intrude on their privacy. Don't make an ass of yourself.

#2: Obey the law. If a road or boundary is posted "No Trespassing," "Private Road" or "Restricted Area," then do not pass. Observe all the usual civil laws regarding drugs, firearms, private property and driving. Above all, don't cross the military border. The law may not always be fair or right, but breaking it makes you vulnerable to arrest and may damage your credibility. From time to time in human history higher principles must override the law, requiring a noble act of civil disobedience, but there is no sense in getting yourself in trouble or irritating the authorities for something trivial that accomplishes nothing. If you are going to pull a Henry David Thoreau, you should at least be sure that your illegal act is going to achieve the goals you want, not the opposite ones.

#3: Don't decide what you will find here before you arrive.

This last piece of advice is more subtle than the other two and applies to any kind of exploration. Too many people arrive at the Black Mailbox thinking they have things all worked out. They *know* what's out

[38]Seriously, 45 mph is about as fast as I would push it on a sandy road. Even on the straight-away, it is easy to start fishtailing and lose control, and at speeds faster than this, you could easily flip the vehicle.

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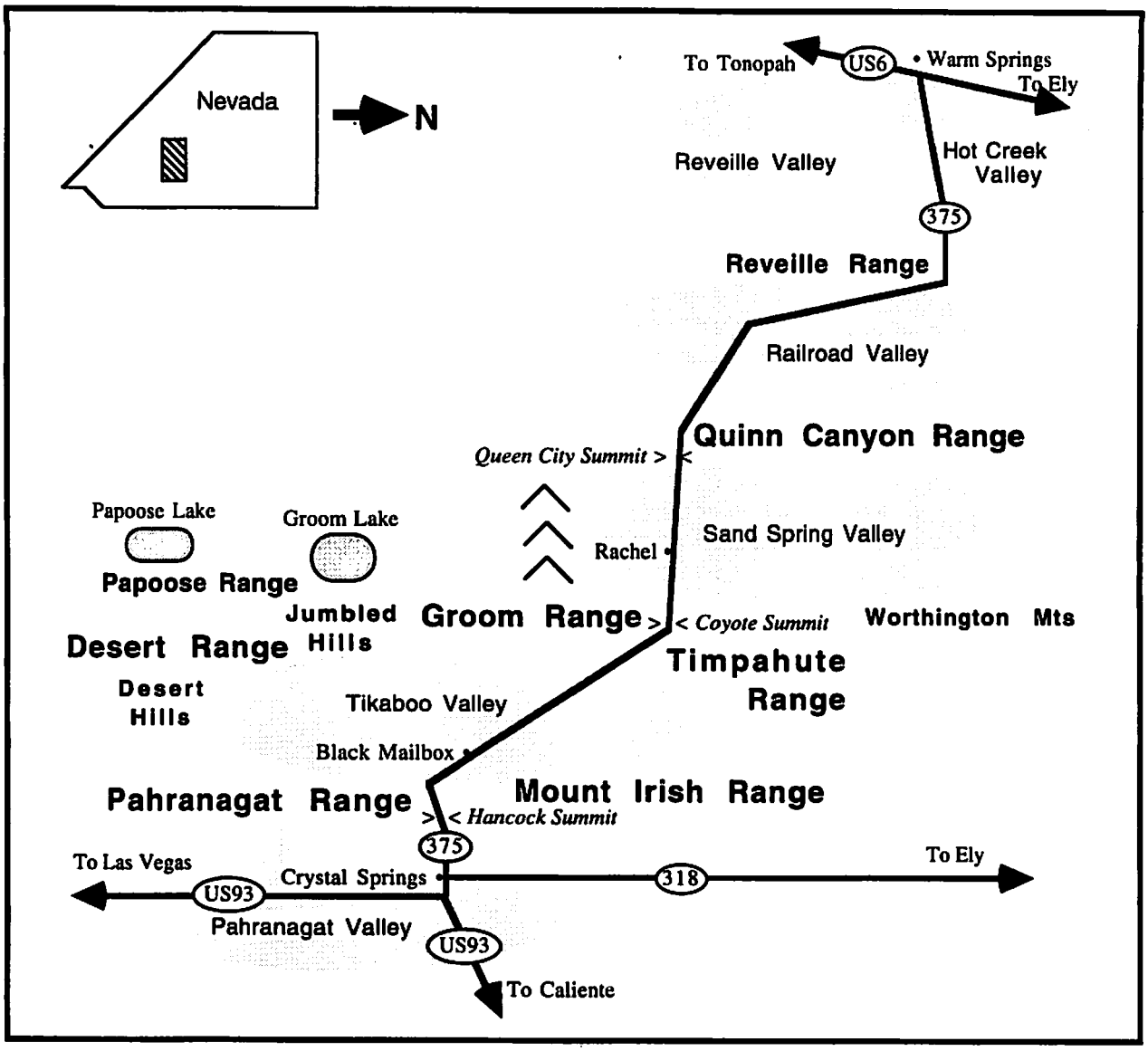
there at Area 51 and seek only to validate their theory. They come here on a Wednesday night, see a few ambiguous lights, and it confirms their whole world view. They leave the next morning immensely satisfied with themselves, convinced that they have absolute proof of everything they always knew anyway.

If anyone knows what is going on at Area 51, it ought to be the people of Rachel, who have been living under bizarre aerial displays for years. Nearly everyone in town has seen unusual lights, but hardly anyone, claims a full understanding of everything going on at the "Test Site." The only people who claim to know are the outsiders, the folks who come up from L.A. on Wednesday night and see exactly what they expect to see. The truth is, recognizing a flying saucer or exotic aircraft here can be immensely difficult amid the vast circus of routine military activity, the optical illusions of the desert and the confusing swamp of speculations brought here by believers. The majority of "UFOs" people see here can undoubtedly be explained by the testing of non-secret aircraft and weapons. If you spend enough time watching, adhere to rigorous scientific principals and leave yourself open to alternative explanations, you can usually see through these red herring in a day or two. For people who have made up their minds before they come, one glimpse of the red herring is all they need to close the case in a single night. Since all their convictions have been confirmed, they feel it unnecessary—and unsettling—to invest in further research.

Most visitors have already made emotional investments and bear private grudges that they expect UFOs to support, and it take very little evidence to confirm their views. Everything happens on a Wednesday night: UFO proponents expect to see flying saucers, and they do. Hardened skeptics expect to debunk the saucer stories, and they do. Spiritualists see spirits. Doomsdayers see the end of the world. Conspiracy buffs find just the evidence they need to link AIDS with JFK. Each of these groups comes to the Black Mailbox with a preordained "agenda" that is sure to cloud their observations. Like Christopher Columbus, who went to his death believing he had sailed to Asia, they often miss a more interesting truth because they have already made up their minds about how the universe ought to be.

Pave Hawk Helicopter over Freedom Ridge, 1994



Highway 375 Mileposts

The mileage log below records all side roads and roadside landmarks along the entire 100-mile length of Highway 375, from the junction with US-93 near Crystal Springs to the junction with US-6 at Warm Springs. Services, mountain passes, turnouts and most dirt roads are listed, as well as notes on saucer/aircraft viewing, local landmarks and town sites. Mile markers correspond to those posted on the highway, clearly marked every mile by small white signs on both sides. These are measured from the western terminus within each county—from the Lincoln/Nye county line on the eastern half of 375 ("LN" mile points below) and from the Warm Springs junction in the western half ("NY" mile points below). Since the majority of visitors are likely to come from the Las Vegas direction, mileposts are listed in reverse order. Decimals between mile markers are estimates.

Although Highway 375 runs roughly northeast to southwest, for convenience I use E and W to denote directions of travel and N and S to refer to sides of highway. (These designations are reversed on side roads: N and S for travel, E and W for sides of the road.) When a direction is spelled out, like "north" or "south", it indicates a compass direction. A "maintained dirt road" is a high quality thoroughfare, regularly graded and passable by nearly all vehicles at relatively high speed—25 to 45 mph. It has no hump in the middle and no big rocks. A "dirt road" is unmaintained but appears passable by passenger cars at low speed. It could be rocky and rutted and have a hump in the middle that may scrape the bottom of low clearance vehicles. A "dirt track" is best left to four wheel drive or high clearance vehicles. Some of these tracks look like they haven't been used in years, and you may have to repair the road yourself as you go along. Unless a detailed

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description of the road is given, these classifications are based on what can be seen from the highway; the road conditions could change further in.

"Parking areas" are wide, flat dirt areas beside the highway; they may not be officially sanctioned, but enough of the vegetation has been destroyed by previous traffic that your parking there won't cause any further damage. A "gravel parking area" is assumed to have the sanction of the state, since somebody has apparently distributed a load of gravel there to improve the surface. Most of these gravel areas were probably staging pads for road construction or maintenance.

While I have explored nearly every dirt road and track off 375, I have edited out the ones that don't lead anywhere. Although I have tried to include as much relevant information as possible, you must exercise your own judgment about where it would be wise to travel. I welcome all corrections and additions to this list. [See address at the end.]

In the milepost log, viewpoints in the vicinity the highway are judged in comparison to the Black Mailbox. An "excellent" vantage point means it is better than the Black Mailbox for viewing any kind of air activity above Groom or Papoose Lakes. However, *none* of the vantage points along the highway are anywhere near as satisfying as being right up close to the border looking down on Groom Lake itself. To reach any of these direct viewpoints, you must be prepared to drive at least 11 miles on dirt roads (usually very good ones) and hike at least an hour into the bush, with a strong possibility that the guards will be watching you the whole time. Not everyone is up to this adventure, but unless you have the courage to try, you will probably be viewing whatever "action" there is from a very remote distance. [See Groom Lake Viewpoints.]

LN 49.6 **Eastern terminus of Highway 375** at its junction with US-93 (at LN 51.0 on US-93). There are no services here, only a derelict casino at the junction. The cars parked here on weekdays are those of workers at the Groom Lake base, who take an early morning bus that runs from Alamo to Area 51.

Nearest services are at **Ash Springs**, 4-1/2 miles south, where you will find gas (Las Vegas price + 20¢), basic groceries, RV park ($9/night) and rest rooms—all at the "R" Place (Texaco) convenience store. This *Viewer's Guide* is available here. Free air for tires at the garage behind the store. Phone (702) 725-3545. Open 24 hours.

Motel, post office, laundry, a small grocery store, gas, major auto repair, pizza and Sheriff's substation can be found in **Alamo**, 12 miles south of the 375 junction. Lodging there is found at Meadow Lane Motel on US-93. (15 rooms. About $25-$30/night. Phone (702) 725-3371.) There is also a motel under the same management at Alamo Valley Truck Stop, about a mile south of Alamo. (13 rooms. About $30-$35/night. Phone (702) 725-3371.) Both motels are simple (no mint on the pillow) but far superior to the Little A'Le'Inn in Rachel.

South of Alamo there are no services—in fact, nothing at all—before Las Vegas, 90 miles distant. To break the monotony of the long trip to Vegas, you can hunt for a **"ghost brothel."** Brothels are legal in Nevada except where prohibited by local ordinance. Clark County, where Las Vegas is located, has long banned them, so there used to be two whorehouses in Lincoln County just across the county line to serve the pent-up demand. The brothels were closed in the late 1970s when the good Mormons of Lincoln County finally outlawed them. One was located at the current site of an active sandpit at about LN 8.5 on US-93. There is apparently no trace left of it. The other brothel was located about a half mile north, and remains of it can still be visited. At the northern perimeter of the sandpit, at mile LN 9.8, look for a water tank on a bluff about 1/2 mile west of the highway. That's it! You can drive there in a 4WD. In regular car, you can drive to the base of the bluff and then walk the short distance to the top. There, you will find some concrete pads, debirs and a deep swimming pool in good condition.

There is cellular phone coverage in the vicinity of Alamo, Ash Springs and Crystal Springs, and about up to mile LN 39.0 on 375, via an AT&T Cellular site on the mountains to the west.

LN 49.3 **Key Pittman Wildlife Management Area.** Some signs regarding hunting, N. Relatively lush vegetation due to the spring. The road N, beside the refuge signs, leads 0.1 mile to a small parking area. There is a Porta-Potty here. There is also a gate, which you can open, and a dangerously sandy 4WD road leading to the edge of Frenchy Lake and beyond. Some locals say they swim in this lake, but it doesn't look very pleasant, being shallow, muddy and choked with weeds.

LN 49.0 **Crystal Springs.** Hardly a town, just a road junction with a hay farm and a few other habitations. No services. Junction with SR-318 North. (On SR-318, don't count on gas south of Ely, 134 miles north.)

Crystal Springs is the garden spot of Highway 375, owing to the presence of liquid water most of the year. Tree-shaded picnic spot at junction. Enjoy the trees while you can because you won't see any more of them on this route. Historic marker S. Crystal Springs was once the county seat and is now a ghost town of sorts, although no old buildings remain. Distances via 375: Rachel 40, Tonopah 148.

LN 43.2 Bladed road N leads 7.3 mi. to **Reed Spring** and some nice forested camping spots, reminiscent of a National Park campground. Offers a dramatic change from the barren wastelands near the highway: cool cedar forests in a rugged canyon. If you don't care about viewing the airspace over the secret base, this is fine place to spend the night. A sturdy sedan can reach the first of the campsites (with caution and the usual off-highway precautions), about 5.5 mi from the hwy. Look for a campfire circle on the left for the best spot. 4WD is required to reach the spring itself, where there is

an abandoned cabin and free flowing water. This also a good tenting spot, very scenic. At an elevation of about 6700 feet, this area is snowbound and inaccessible in winter but pleasantly cool in the summer.

LN 41.6 Dirt track S, leads about 8 mi. to the NW flank of Badger mountain. High clearance required. For a possible hike of Badger (that we have not yet tried), turn L at an intersection 6.8 mi. from highway and proceed to end of road. Road is snowbound in winter. (For a hike in this area, you'll need the Badger Spring USGS 7-1/2 Minute map.)

LN 38.1 **"Horney's Rest Stop."** Maintained dirt road N to "Road Side Rest" (marked westbound; unmarked eastbound). Until recently "Horney's Rest Stop" was spray painted on a rock visible westbound. Leads to a dusty parking area with a trash barrel and picnic table.

A reader calls this "Horney Lynn's Rest Stop." He reports: "Now don't involve me in a domestic to do. Story goes, while building your direct road seen after Hancock Pass, Lynn would ride there for a lunchtime meet with her old man. Fellow workers, never invited, thought it should be noted so neither got lost."

Ridgetop viewpoint. From the rest stop, a 4WD road leads northwest 4.3 mi. to join the power lines and follow them to the top of the ridge behind the Black Mailbox. (This point where the power lines top the crest is visible due north from LN 32.3, and you can hike to it from LN 31.1.) This is a superior mountaintop viewpoint for the Tikaboo Valley and the Groom Lake area, far better than any location along the highway. Although you still can't see the base, it would make a fine spot for viewing the airspace or monitoring the radio waves. At the fork at 0.8 mi., go L. At the fork a 3.8 mi., go R, then L at the fork at the top of the hill. 4WD is definitely required for final climb to ridge. At the crest, a small peak obscures part of the horizon to the southwest, but you can climb this one in about 20 minutes for an unobstructed view. (Note: there is no direct 4WD access between the ridge and LN 31.1, even though a track seems to beckon in that direction.)

LN 38 If traveling westbound, you can see a small structure at the top of a hill ahead to the left. It appears, from this vantage point, to be an outhouse, which is how it was first reported to me. (See next.)

LN 37.6 **Hancock Summit, Elev. 5592.** Paved parking strip and litter barrel N. Hancock Summit is a mountain pass through the Pahranagat Range, connecting the Pahranagat and Tikaboo Valleys. This is the only stretch of SR-375 with any significant curves or grades, although still nothing to worry about for most vehicles.

Monument Hill. East of the parking strip is a small hill. From this point on the road, you can see what appears to be a concrete block on the top of the hill—something you'd miss if you weren't looking for it. If you make the rigorous ten minute hike to that point, you will find a "sacred monument" erected within the last few years by the "Aaronic Order," apparently a splinter group of the Mormons. It is a stone-and-concrete monument, about six feet high, with a bronze plaque on the face. The monument is both well cared for and obscure, displaying the not-too-informative inscription at right.

AT THIS POINT, ON MARCH 21, 1938, DR. M. L. GLENDENNING RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING BY ANGELICAL ADMINISTRATION:
"UNTO YOU MY FELLOW SERVANT, IN THE NAME OF ELIAS, WE COME HOLDING ALL OF THE KEYS AND AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE PRIESTHOOD OF AARON.
"AND YOU, BEING A SON OF AARON, SET APART AND ORDAINED IN THE SPIRIT. AND HAVING COME INTO THE FLESH BY THE WILL OF THE FATHER, WE NOW PLACE OUR HANDS UPON YOUR HEAD AND RESTORE UNTO YOU ALL OF THE OF THE KEYS AND AUTHORITY OF THE PRIESTHOOD UNTO WHICH YOU WERE ORDAINED IN THE SPIRIT.
"TO ACT IN THIS AUTHORITY WITH ALL OF THE KEYS OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF AARON AS THE FIRST HIGHPRIEST OF THE ORDER OF AARON.
"TO CONFER UNTO THOSE OF THE HOUSE OF LEVI THIS SAME AUTHORITY AND KEYS IN PART OR IN WHOLE ACCORDINGLY AS MAY BE APPOINTED UNTO THEM BY YOU."

Talk about legalese! What I want to know is, who were those Angelical Administrators? And what did they give Dr. G. the keys to—*a flying saucer*?

Beside the monument is a steel box containing some pamphlets and a guest register. The pamphlets, which are packed with Scripture, cast no further light on what happened on March 21, 1938; they just make things murkier and murkier. Of mild interest is the pamphlet, "What are the Requirements for Eternal Life?" which you may or may not find spiritually enlightening but which does provide a few hints about the Aaronic Order. The key to eternal life, the pamphlet says, is to give up all ones earthly possessions.

> In Lecture Sixth, verse 7 of the Lectures on Faith, the Prophet Joseph Smith asserts: "Let us here observe, that a religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things never has the power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things. It was through this sacrifice, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy eternal life."
>
> The L.D.S. [Mormon] Church today does not emphasize this complete and literal consecration and has not required it since Joseph Smith's day....
>
> We therefore conclude that the L.D.S. Church, according to the Prophet Joseph Smith, has departed from the faith that leads unto eternal life if it does not require this sacrifice.

The pamphlet does not address the sticky problems of how and to whom one should give up ones earthly possessions and how to proceed with ones daily life after doing so. Our old enemies, the Communists, ran into some difficulties in a similar pursuit: "From each according to ability; to each according to need." Human greed, in that case, transcended ideology, but this is not to say that the Aaronic Order is a lost cause. Given the extensive holdings of the Mormon Church in everything from copper mines to shopping malls, an underground movement toward Spartan idealism has its appeal.

A glance at the guest register suggests that the visitors to the monument are equally divided between Utah residents on godly pilgrimages and heathen outsiders in search of flying saucers. As it turns out, this ridge does offer a good high-

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angle view of Groom and Papoose airspaces. Walking a few hundred yards east on this ridge from the monument yields an even better view. This may be better watching spot than the Black Mailbox for the Groom and Papoose areas, with the disadvantage being that you cannot see either the north or south ends of the Tikaboo Valley.

The ten minute hike to the monument is surprisingly strenuous, due the high altitude and steep slope. For a gentler slope, park about 0.1 m E of the litter barrel, on the E end of the road cut near a sign saying "HILL," visible eastbound. Hike up the slope S from here to the monument.

LN 36.8 Hidden dirt track S, at the top end of the guard rail (marked with orange). Leads about 1/3 mile up a ravine to end at a wildlife guzzler.[39]

LN 36.4 A wrecked 50s era GM car is lying on its side about 100 yards N of roadway. A grand boat! We have heard a secondhand story that a pickup truck carrying atomic material also ran off the road in this vicinity in the 1950s, but we haven't had a chance to track that story down.

LN 36.1 Large gravel parking area S. High angle perspective on the airspace over Groom Lake but nearby hills prevent visibility to either side.

LN 35.4 S: at the lower end of the guard rail is a dirt road that leads 0.1 mile to some sand piles in a stream bed. From here, a track leads L and R through a sandy streambed. The R track from the sand piles leads along the base of the mountains. (It is a high clearance road that becomes lost in the brush 2.0 mi. from the highway.) The L track (4WD) leads about 1 mile up the saddleback to a wildlife guzzler, just before the crest of the saddleback, where the road ends.

It was in the vicinity of the wildlife guzzler that the ***Encounters* UFO show** filmed their hike to "Freedom Ridge" in July 1994. They had actually driven to the top of Freedom Ridge the night before, but that was judged by the producers to be not interesting enough, so they staged a "hike" to Freedom Ridge from this location almost 15 miles away. I was part of this charade, although I was careful to keep my mouth shut. We built a fire, created a flimsy tent of camouflage netting and stacked up equipment cases in an impressive configuration. The only purpose of this exercise was to provide a backdrop for an interview with "Agent X" a frequent visitor to the area who was leading this expedition. After that, we hiked as a group up a nearby hill, on cue from the director, who said "Action" and "Cut." At the top of this small hill, we looked down on the "base," which we could not actually seen, and Agent X discussed it with the *Encounters* correspondent, who had not been on Freedom Ridge the night before. The resulting piece, presented as news, was pretty exciting and made us all seem bigger than life. [See Desert Rat #10].

Visible from this point on the highway is the **Alamo breccia**, the band of solid rock that runs diagonally through the face of the hill immediately S. This anomalous layer is evidence of some catastrophic event about 375 million years ago. Apparently, a large body from space crashed near here during the Jurassic period, and it threw out a lot of debris which forms this unusual layer. (The actual impact could have been 50-100 miles west; possibly in the vicinity of Rachel.) This area was a sea at the time; later uplifting happened to expose the breccia in this location.[40]

LN 35 Approximate start of the **Tikaboo Valley**. Lowest road elevation: 4500 feet. The Tikaboo Valley is referred to locally as "Steve's Valley," after the rancher Steve Medlin who owns the grazing and water rights here. His ranch compound is the cluster of buildings you see in the middle of the valley.

LN 34.6 **Groom Lake Road.**[41] This is a well maintained 45 mph dirt road leading to the restricted Groom Lake facility. You can travel down this road 13.8 miles before encountering some intimidating "Keep Out" signs. They threaten fines and jail for trespassing and admonish you not to take photographs. You can drive down this road to see the Cammo Dudes lurking around near the signs. (They are usually on a hill just across the border.) **Do not pass the signs**, and do not hike near the border unless you are sure where it is.

There is isolated cellular phone coverage at the junction of Groom Lake Road and Highway 375. Most of the rest of the Tikaboo Valley (and all of the highway west) is blacked out.

From the highway, you can see almost the entire non-restricted part of Groom Lake Road. It runs arrow-straight for about 11 miles before entering the Jumbled Hills at the S end of the Groom Range. Because these hills loom higher in your field of vision as you approach, viewing sites along this road are probably no better than at the paved highway.

Below are mileage points on Groom Lake Road, measured from the highway. (N and S refer to the right and left sides of the road, respectively.) Security patrols ("Cammo Dudes") in white Jeep Cherokees could be parked beside the road or on side roads; there is almost always a patrol somewhere in the valley. Expect to be shadowed if they spot you, although the patrol keeps its distance on public land. If you approach them, they usually run away, back across the border.

4.2 N: Dirt road leads 1.0 m to Crescent Reservoir corral (then turn right to Black Mailbox).

5.1 N: South end of **Mailbox Road**. Often confused with the road to Medlin Ranch at Mile 6.5. Both have stop signs and 35 mph signs, but only this one has a yellow "curve" sign. This is a good dirt road leading 1.1 m to the Crescent Reservoir corral and beyond to the Black Mailbox at LN 29.5.

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[39] A rainwater collector and cistern for small animals. This and other guzzlers were apparently constructed by the military as part of the mitigation for the Groom Range withdrawal of the 1980s.

[40] From *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, July 12, 1993: "rock FOrmation Offers Clue to Mystery, Geologists Say," by Keith Rogers.

[41] Some locals call this the "51 Road" because it leads to Area 51, and some highway workers refer to it as ""Mercury Highway" or Mercury Road," because it could take you, eventually, to Mercury and could be seen as an extension of the Mercury Highway at the Nevada Test Site. "Groom Lake Road" is used here because that seems to be the most popular common usage among visitors, but there is also supposed to be another road of the same name approaching Groom Lake from the Nevada Test Site in the west.

S: **South Tikaboo Road.** Good dirt road leads 7.3 miles south to intersect with the Restricted Zone at a well marked gate. Most of the road is maintained and accessible to most vehicles.

5.7 Dirt track diagonally S. Better access at 6.0.

6.0 S: **Southeastern Mine Road.** Joins the track at Mile 5.7, then heads diagonally southwest across the valley to eventually intersect the Restricted Zone in the Jumbled Hills. This road is maintained for the first 6.3 miles.

- 4.3 Four-way crossroads...
  Right: Leads 2.1 mi. west to a dry reservoir and eventually intersects Castle Rock Road.
  Left: According to the map, leads 6 miles east to intersect with the South Tikaboo Road. High clearance.
- 6.3 Water tank and turn-around. Road is unmaintained from here. Best for high clearance.
- 6.6 Road enters wide streambed and proceeds along base to border. Very sandy; not for cars.
- 8.1 Road intersects restricted zone at well-marked gate. TV camera on hill L.

6.5 Maintained dirt road N leads 1.9 miles to the Medlin Ranch compound. Often confused with Mailbox Rd. at 5.1.

9.4 Dirt track S, runs 1.9 m. to join Castle Rock Road (below). Better access at 10.9.

10 **Approximate start of restricted airspace.** Beyond this point, you can travel on the ground, but you can't fly. (Stash your wings.)

10.9 S: **Castle Rock Road.** Unmaintained, high clearance only. Leads to Castle Rocks and the southern border. This was also formerly the road to Freedom Ridge.

- 0.7 Fork. Stay left. (The road right simply rejoins this one further along.)
- 1.1 Four-way crossroads....
  Proceeding **straight** takes you to Roadblock Canyon south of Freedom Ridge, 2.3 mi. from this point. There you will find a hump in the road—the former roadblock erected by the Air Force and surmounted by the Freedom Fighters. 4WDs can get over it, but you will encounter Restricted Area signs about 1/4 mile beyond marking the new border.
  Turning L at the crossroads, the road becomes much more rugged and sandy. 4WD rqd. Watch for diversions around eroded sections of road. Continuing L on this road...
- 1.5 Road left leads east 2.1 mi. to intersect with the South Tikaboo Road (from Groom Lake Road, Mile 5.1).
- 3.5 **Castle Rocks.** Prominent rock formations. A road to the L leads to a courtyard between the rocks, an ideal place for an encampment—modern or ancient. At the base of one of the rocks is a shallow cave containing some modest Indian petroglyphs. These consist of grooves etched on the floor of the cave. The meaning of these "pit-and-groove" petroglyphs is unknown.
- 5.0 Restricted Zone border. Well-marked by signs, a barbed-wire gate and a TV camera.

11.5 Former site of two big no-photography signs[42], erected by the military late April 1993 and taken down in August 1994. These signs was apparently added in response to the visit to White Sides by a television crew from WFAA in Dallas, Apr. 20-21, 1993. They were apparently removed shortly after the seizure of video tape from a KNBC TV crew from Los Angeles on July 19. The removal of the signs may signal the military retreat from making complaints about photography, but this is uncertain. (There have been no conflicts over photography between then and the date of this edition.)

11.5 N: **Campfire Hill.** At the beginning of the first curve on Groom Lake Road, just beyond a 35 mph sign, a dirt road N leads about 500 feet to a turn-around circle and a water tank. From there, a dirt track leads to the top of a small hill, where there is a campfire circle.

Different watchers have different names for this small hill, with ego playing a significant role. "World's Foremost UFO Researcher" Sean Morton named it after his girlfriend, reserving the name "Morton's Mountain" for White Sides. Other watchers do not recognize these appellations. They do, however, concede Morton's claim to being the first to build a campfire on this hill, and they bestow on it the name "Morton's Mound" in recognition. To avoid sectarian violence, I refer to this rise simply as "Campfire Hill." The top used to be a favorite camp-out spot for Morton and his tour (before I chased him away with ridicule and sarcasm).

This was once the access point for a hike of **White Sides**, the light-faced mountain about two miles northwest of Campfire Hill. White Sides was one of the public viewpoints into Groom Lake that were seized in April 1995. There is a 4WD road from the cattle trough toward the base of White Sides, but you will encounter new Restricted Area signs before getting there (about 1 mi.).

13.6 **Former Freedom Ridge Trailhead.** Known to the Cammo Dudes as "K-Mart." Easy-to-miss parking spot N, a few yards beyond the "Keep Right" sign. This is the closest off-road parking to the border. This was once where people parked for the 1-1/2 mile hike to the most popular viewpoint overlooking Groom Lake.

13.8 **The Border.** Restricted Area begins in a blind ravine, just before the road turns a corner. There is no fence or gate, just a half dozen warning signs on either side of the road, reminiscent of those nasty signs on approach to the witch's castle in *Wizard of Oz*: Each is a different creative variation on the theme, "Keep Out." Once, there were only two signs, but they apparently were not enough to keep out the rif-raf, so more signs have been added in a futile effort to drive home the point. For those of a legal bent, there is a lot of small print, with the most memorable phrase being: "Use of Deadly Force Authorized."

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[42] One sign can be seen on the cover of MUFON Journal, June 1993. The other sign was identical.

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I'd turn back if I were you.

In spite of the apparent loneliness of the area, there is usually a Cammo Dude patrol and a surveillance camera (or two) pointed at this location, perhaps relayed to the guard house. The camera is mounted on a tripod on top of the ridge to the left.[43] There is also another camera nearby pointing in another direction, and just inside the border to the right is a solar powered optical detector, apparently designed to sound an alarm whenever a vehicle crosses the line. You can walk along the border to examine the device more closely. Obviously, you should not expect to drive beyond this point undetected.

The military boundary is actually about 10-20 feet *before* the signs at a point where there are orange posts beside the road. Note that they run diagonally to the road, not perpendicular as the signs suggest. If you walk beyond the posts to the signs themselves, you do so at your own peril. More of these posts can be seen leading into the hills on either side, tracing a straight line north and south, but the lines turn east just beyond view to take in White Sides and Freedom Ridge. Just beyond the signs, there is a bend in the road, and after another bend there is a guard house where the reception will be very unfriendly. At that point, you have already intruded well into the Zone despite plenty of warning, and you will probably be arrested immediately. A few bold adventurers have proceeded to the guard house and pleaded ignorance or illiteracy. Typically, they are arrested, taken to the County Jail, held for a few hours, fined for trespassing and forced to sign papers promising not to do it again. Such lenient treatment is not guaranteed. [See "If You Cross the Line" under LAW ENFORCEMENT.] There is no need to drive down the road if you want to see the guard house. You can climb the ridge opposite the Mile 13.6 parking spot and look down the other side, but don't do this unless you are certain of the new border.

Resuming on Highway 375...

LN 32.3 **Large gravel parking area S—a good viewing site for the airspace over Groom and Papoose Lakes.** Offers convenience, plenty of elbow room and the comfort of the paved highway. Probably a better viewing spot than the Black Mailbox because of the slightly higher altitude.

Near the W end of the gravel area, close to a wooden post and a Joshua tree is a curious hole in the ground, about 1-1/2 feet wide and who-knows-how deep (all the way to China?). It would be a nasty thing to fall into. I assume this hole is a test bore for water. Deep bores have been drilled in this valley with no water found.[44]

LN 31.8 Here there is a **big black burn mark** on the westbound side of the pavement. No, it is not a saucer crash site. This is the place where an M-1 tank and the vehicle carrying it caught fire in October 1992. According to a Deputy Sheriff, the tank was an obsolete one being transported to the Nellis bombing range to be turned into Swiss cheese. The tank shifted on the flatbed truck that was carrying it so the treads of the tank dragged against tires of the flatbed. The tires caught fire, then the wood of the flatbed caught fire, then everything flammable in the tank went up in smoke. The marks on the pavement and debris nearby reveal an intense fire, hot enough to melt deep ruts in the pavement and to leave puddles of molten metal on the ground.

LN 31.7 **Best Camping Spot.** Small dirt track S (navigable by most cars) leads about 0.2 mi. to a secluded parking place for one or two vehicles, where the road ends. This is probably the best spot for camping near the paved road, invisible from the highway but offering a good-as-you-get-from-the-highway view toward Groom and Papoose. Similar view as LN 32.3, although a butte obscures a small section of the horizon. Sandy ground makes this a good place to pitch a tent, and the surrounding terrain may provide some protection from the wind. From here, you can take a pleasant hike (about 20 minutes each way) to the big butte straight ahead where you have an excellent panoramic view of the Tikaboo Valley and a high angle view toward Groom and Papoose. (If you go there, you should add a few rocks to the stone shelter outlined at the top.) Highly recommended as a discreet alternative to the Black Mailbox.

LN 31.4 At this location on the highway is a small knoll immediately N. You can walk about 0.2 mile to the top for a commanding view of the Tikaboo Valley.

LN 31.1 Rough dirt road N, leads 1/2 mile to a water tank, then it becomes high clearance only. From the water tank, the track to the right is an access road for the power lines that run over a ridge above and down to Crystal Springs. Following the power lines on foot to the top of the ridge provides a good high angle view toward Groom and Papoose Lakes on one side and Crystal Springs on the other. The hike from here is a strenuous 1-1/2 hours each way, but this high point can also be reached by 4WD from LN 38.1.

The straight track from the water tank leads 0.5 to the top of a hill (recommended on foot only), where there was once an installation of some kind, possibly an antenna. Some minor stone works and anchoring pins can be found here.

LN 29.5 **The famous "Black Mailbox," a religious site for the True Believers where many UFO sightings have been reported.** In the author's experience, most of the UFO sighting reports here and along the rest of the highway are dubious. Typical reported "UFOs" are flares associated with the war games exercises taking place frequently in the Nellis Range. The mailbox itself seems very mysterious, although it receives only ordinary mail for the Medlin

[43] The camera equipment at the border has been moved around recently. Previously, one of the two camera tripods was on a hill on public land (opposite the Mile 13.7 parking spot) looking straight down the Groom Lake Road. We had a picnic there and made faces into the lens from two feet away, and they moved the camera across the border a few days later. That camera (the larger of the two) is a Cohu brand (San Diego, CA), S/N 180815, S/O 2827, Model #4862-2100/0000. Powered by a 3.8 watt/.24 amp solar cell. On the tripod, there appears to be both a 12" microwave dish, apparently pointed at Bald Mtn., and a standard UHF antenna, spine pointed in the same direction and labeled 469.2500 MHz.

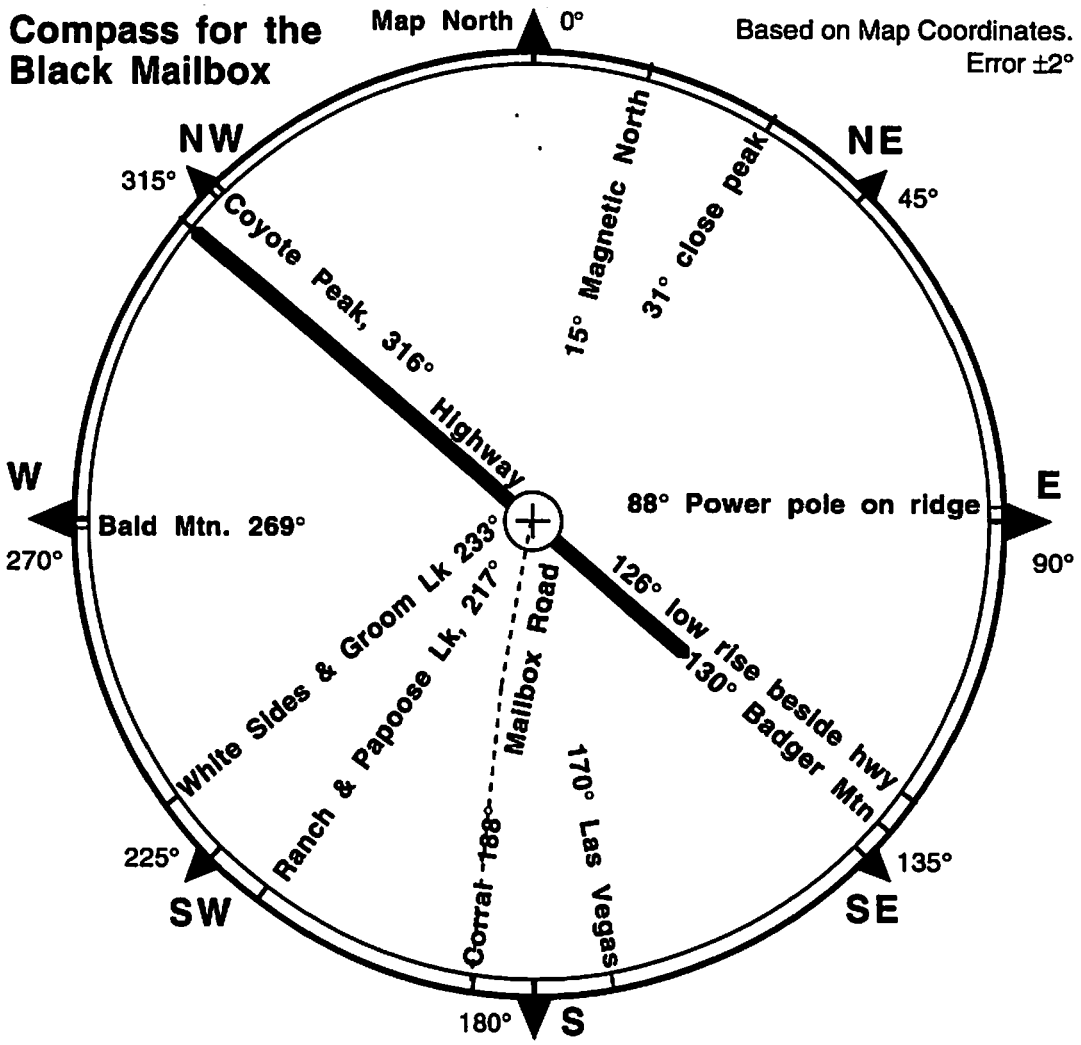
[44] For their cattle, the Medlins have to pipe in water from a mountain spring. They then truck it to water tanks that feed cattle troughs scattered throughout the range.

ranch. Here, a maintained dirt road ("Mailbox Road") leads S 3.8 mi. to Crescent Reservoir and a corral, then continues to Groom Lake Road (middle road—be careful not to proceed on main road right, which taked you to the ranch).

The Black Mailbox is an arbitrary viewing site, chosen by UFO buffs only because it is the only roadside landmark for miles. (Even then, you have to be on the lookout for it or you will breeze right by.) Similar views, some probably better, can be had for several miles on either side. As I see it, the Black Mailbox is for the busloads of Japanese tourists or anthropologists who want to observe the True Believers. For more comfortable, less obvious and less intrusive highway locations, I recommend LN 32.3 or LN 31.7.

If you prefer to watch from the Black Mailbox, here are some points of etiquette, in deference to the people who live and work here:

- Stay clear of the mailbox itself, and be sure to leave Steve Medlin enough space so that he can drive by it to get his mail.
- Do not block the road. To avoid admonishments by the Sheriff and a possible fine, you should park off the immediate shoulder of both Mailbox Road and the highway.
- Do not litter or leave behind any other evidence that you were there.



LN 27.5 **Wild Horse Valley Road to Murphy Gap.** This road leads to the north through Wild Horse Valley to Murphy Gap, 23.5 mi. N. Although it looks maintained at the beginning, it gets rougher. A sturdy car can make it to the intersection 10.5 mi. from the hwy.; after that, high clearance may be required. Even then, but it's a long, rough trip through remote country to Murphy Gap. (Murphy Gap and Garden Valley are more easily reached by taking paved roads to Hiko, then a maintained BLM road W from Mile 8.9 on SR-318.)

This road also provides access to the town sites of *Crescent* and *Logan*. Roads to each branch off this one at a four way intersection 10.5 mi. N of the paved highway. For Crescent, turn R at this intersection; for Logan, go straight, and for Murphy Gap, go left. A sturdy car can make it to Crescent, 2.1 mi from that intersection. Here, extensive stone foundations are dominated by a tall brick furnace tower. A big stone house is mostly intact on the hillside opposite the tower. Logan requires a 4WD. For a half-day adventure when leaving the area, you can drive through Logan Pass and come out near Hiko. (Just stay on the most-travelled road.) We have never found the Logan townsite, only mine workings, but there are several abandoned cabins along the road. Off the main road east of Logan pass is a BLM

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petroglyph site; to find it, look for an outhouse on a ridge south of the road. Neither Logan or Crescent should be attempted in winter or inclement weather, and be prepared for remote back-country travel with all the usual precautions.

LN 26.1 **Alleged abduction site!** Parking area S. While watching the skies from this location on March 16, 1993, ufologist Bill Hamilton and his wife reported seeing dramatic lights and claim to have been abducted by an alien named Quaylar.[45] You can hang out here if you want. This is a comfortable and spacious place to park, although completely exposed.

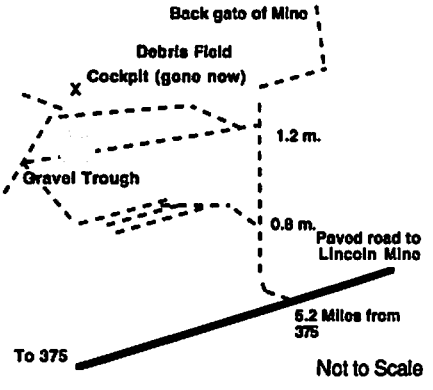
The mountains to the west are the Groom Range, which is mostly off limits to civilians. The tallest peak is Bald Mtn. (elevation 9380 feet). The tiny structure at the summit appears to be a radar dome, along with a large solar array to the right (visible only through a telescope). From this vicinity on the highway, some people look up at Bald Mtn. and think they see the face of a giant alien. (Can you see him?)

LN 22.5 Maintained dirt road S, straight across valley. Leads to base of Groom Mountain, but Restricted Area signs cut you off before you get there.

LN 21.8 Dirt track N. Forks immediately. Right: Leads 0.1 mile to end at sand piles. Left: Leads 0.1 mile to a depression, perhaps once a sandpit for road construction. The base of the sandpit makes a good camping spot, hidden from the road and somewhat sheltered from the wind. Road is accessible to any vehicle.

LN 20.1 **Umetco Road.** Mostly paved road to Lincoln Mine, shown on maps as "Tempiute," but not to be confused with the older settlements at LN 13.6. (Tempiute is pronounced "Tem-pie-yoot" and an alternative spelling is Timpahute.) Lincoln Mine produced Tungsten as late as the 80s, but is now permanently shut down. This road also provides access to the site where an F-4 jet crashed in the early 1980s. A sign that used to be here said: "Umetco Minerals Corp., Emerson Operations 9.6 miles." Trash barrel at the corner. Mile points for this road, as measured from 375...

5.2 **Road to jet crash site L.** Easy to miss. Leads to a network of new roads, apparently bulldozed for the recovery operation. The road is rough, so if you don't have a high clearance vehicle, you should go as far as you can, then walk. About 0.8 mile up this road there is a fork with the more traveled road going left; you go right. At 1.2 miles from the paved road, a road comes in at an angle from the left. Turn sharply left here, bear right at the next fork, and go up the steep incline. Drive about a quarter mile until you get to the next fork. Get out of the car here and walk *back* on the road from here, scanning along the upper slope for debris. Once you find one piece of debris, you will probably find others.



The crash probably took place around 1984. Two aviators were involved the crash, and it is unclear whether they survived.[46] There have been many crashes in the area over the years, but in most cases recovery crews come by to pick up *all* the pieces. This crash is unusual in that, until a few months ago, most of the plane was still on the mountainside, scattered over a wide area. An amateur prospector stumbled upon this site and showed it to me in March 1993. I publicized its existence in Edition 1.2 of this *Viewer's Guide*, and guess what happened? I made a follow-up visit in August 1993 and found that most of the plane is now gone, including the heavy cockpit section and most of the large panel pieces. Curious coincidence? *Somebody must be reading this book.* If the government "repossessed" the jet as a matter pride, then, as usual, they did a shoddy job. Whoever came didn't make a clean sweep but took only the largest and most obvious pieces and left behind many others.

I know of other crash sites (mostly F-4s), but it now seems unwise to report them publicly. Upon request, I may be willing to reveal what I know to loyal readers who give me the secret handshake.

7.0? Pavement ends, and a good dirt road continues to Lincoln Mine (shown on maps as Tempiute—approx. Mile 9.6). This Tempiute (not to be confused with the two "Old" Tempiutes at LN 13.6) is a recently abandoned mine operation—not too romantic. A crew has recently sealed up the mine and hauled out all the equipment. You can continue beyond this point on maintained dirt roads to rejoin Highway 375 just E of Rachel (at LN 11.7 or LN 10.2). (The unpaved portion can be treacherous in winter and in wet weather.)

LN 19.5 Dirt road S and large parking area. The road leads up to a network of interesting high-clearance-only tracks at the N end of the Groom Range, one of which leads to the Andy's Mine (which I have not yet found). Continue straight for Keyhole Road, a 4WD road down the other side of the ridge to Valley Road and Rachel. Most roads in this area appear to be outside the Restricted Zone, but be sure you know the boundaries before traveling here. The main road is best for high clearance, but a sturdy car can make it to the crest at Mile 8.0.

LN 18.3 Dirt track N, probably leads along E side of Tempiute Mtn. (road visible in distance) to jet crash site mentioned above and back gate of Lincoln Mine. Very rugged.

LN 16.5 **Coyote Summit, elevation 5591 feet.** This is a pass over the ridge connecting the Groom and Tempiute Ranges, providing passage between Tikaboo and Sand Spring Valleys. I have often seen coyotes here, so the name is

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[45] See MUFON Journal Article, "Area 51 Encounter," Aug. 1993, in REFERENCES.

[46] The name imprints from the side of their craft are on display in the cactus garden in front of the Little A-Le-Inn. The fact that the canopy was found near the crash site suggests they did not eject, and a boot found in the wreckage supports this notion. However, military visitors to the Inn have reported said that the crew ejected in the nick of time.

appropriate. Paved parking strips and litter barrels on both sides of the highway. Dirt track S, downslope, is apparently part of the old highway. It dead-ends, but provides a hidden camping area.

On the back of one of the "Coyote Summit" signs at the turnout is a large decal for the "4450th Tactical Group" the group that tested the Stealth fighter at Tonopah Test Range. Military jets frequently pass over this point from east to west enroute to combat exercises.

LN 13.6 Dirt road N, leads 2.7 mi. uphill to the "Old" Tempiute ghost towns, not to be confused with "New" Tempiute (or Lincoln Mine) accessible from LN 20.1 or LN 11.7. There are two separate sites referred to as Old Tempiute, accessible on each side of a fork about a mile from the highway. They each consist of some ancient stone foundations. The access roads are rough, but passable by a car.

This road also provides access to two good viewing sites for the Tikaboo and Sand Spring Valleys.

On 375, the road to Old Tempiute starts immediately across the highway from a sign, visible eastbound, that says, "Alamo 47, Caliente 77." About a mile up this road, it forks, with the more traveled road going right. The left road, probably high clearance only, leads to one of the ghost towns and some mines but not to the viewing sites. The descriptions below apply to each of the forks.

Right Fork...

Some old stone foundations start about 2 miles from the highway. The discovery of round-headed nails here (a modern convenience) and some pieces of newspaper, suggest that this site dates to the 1930s. At 2.7 miles, the navigable portion of the road ends at a parking area at the base of a narrow gorge. Here there is a gate (open) and a blank sign that might have once said "No Trespassing". (Since no one has bothered to maintain it we can assume they no longer care, and Rachel residents have no reservations about going beyond the gate.) Beyond the gate, the main track leads steeply uphill through the gorge to an abandoned mining operation, then to the top of the ridge and back down again on the other side. (See "Upper Viewpoint" below.) Before this gate, there is space for parking. A second dirt track, outside the gate, leads from the parking area steeply up the hillside on the left. Each of these roads lead to excellent vantage points over both the Tikaboo and Sand Spring valleys, one about a 10 minute hike from the parking area and the other about a 35 minute hike. Both vantage points offer a high angle perspective on all the key locations: To the left is the Tikaboo Valley and the airspace for Groom and Papoose Lakes—together, the area where the saucers are claimed to operate. To the right are Sand Spring and Railroad Valleys, where many conventional aircraft *definitely* operate. Even if you see nothing to the left, you will probably get a good show on the right, at least on a weeknight. One shortcoming, however, is that you have to leave the comfort of your car, which is mainly a consideration in the cold months.

Lower Viewpoint. The second track, running steeply up the side of the hill, leads to an exposed ridge overlooking Coyote Summit. Unless you have a sure-footed, high clearance vehicle and a confident driver, you will have to park at the base and walk up, but it isn't far to go: no more than 10 minutes. At the top are some radio transponders which re-transmit Las Vegas TV stations for Rachel residents. Walk about 100 feet beyond the antennae and you will find a couple of small rocks to sit on. The road continues down slope from here to dead-end at a mine tunnel.

The main shortcomings of this viewpoint are (1) Desert Valley and the eastern side of Tikaboo Valley are partially obscured by a hillside and (2) the viewing angle for the airspace over Groom and Papoose Lakes is not as good as at the Black Mailbox or LN 32.3. These problems do not apply to the upper viewpoint.

Upper Viewpoint. From the parking area, you can also hike up the road through the gorge, beyond the white gate. The track leads up past an interesting silver mine and some stone foundation to a lower peak of Tempiute Mountain. Here you can see all of Tikaboo Valley, as well as the valleys to the south, and the high altitude offers a pretty good view of the Groom and Papoose airspaces. The hike takes about 35 minutes (or longer if you are out of shape). A four-wheel drive with an experienced driver might also be able to handle this road. Whenever you encounter side roads, stay on the most traveled road. The Silver mine is about 10 minutes on foot from the parking area. I am told that it is owned by Reland Johnson and was abandoned about 10 years ago. (The tunnel is about 1/4 mile long and ends at an ore chute from a higher level. About 150 feet inside the tunnel is a tiny ore train.) A second mine tunnel is about 10 minutes beyond on the road, and about 5 minutes beyond that is the remains of a stone house, reportedly dating to the 1860s. Another 10 minutes and you are at the top of the peak, where, of all things, there is an old bed sitting alone. Here you have an excellent view in all directions but north. From there, the road continues down the other side of the mountain, to connect with SR-375 probably at LN 18.0.

On the drive from the parking area back to the highway, there is an good view of Rachel and Sand Spring Valley below.

Left Fork...

About a mile from the highway (LN 13.6), take the left fork for a second small ghost town and some mine workings. A high clearance vehicle can probably make it to the first of the stone foundations, about 1.5 mi. from fork. After that, the road becomes badly eroded, and you will have to proceed on foot regardless of what you are driving. The hike is very interesting. The remnants of about dozen buildings are lined up along the road as it runs through a narrow ravine. Follow the main road as far as it goes. Near where it ends, another road snakes up

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the hillside on the left. This road leads about a mile up and around the ridge to dead end at a mine tunnel. This hike up this side road offers a good view of Rachel. The tunnel where the road ends heads down into the mountain at an angle of about 30°. It's a solid, hard-rock mine but it doesn't go very far, only about 100 feet.

LN 12.1 Dirt track N, leads to sand pit (also accessible from LN 11.7).

LN 11.7 Dirt road to "New" Tempiute (Lincoln Mine). Westbound, this road is marked by a "Tempiute" sign. Eastbound, the sign says, "Thru Truck Route." The most traveled road continues around Tempiute Mtn. to rejoin 375 at LN 20.1.

Just after leaving the highway (0.1 mi.), a side road forks right. This goes just around the corner to a sand pit, which provides a private and comfortable place to park or pitch a tent. This is the closest discreet parking place to Rachel.

LN 11.4 **Valley Road.** A maintained dirt road S, built only a few years ago to provide access to the northern entrance to the Groom Lake facility.[47] [Another access point for this gate is at LN 2.8.] Some mile points for this road are as follows, measured from the highway. N and S are the sides of the road.

1.8 Road N to Rachel. Shown as "Groom Road" on property maps. If driven straight through, connects to LN 9.5.

2.6 Corral S. Track N to farm.

3.4 **Keyhole Road.** This dirt track goes S at a bend in the main road. This challenging 4WD road leads through a narrow gorge and over the ridge to the Tikaboo Valley at LN 19.5. If you want to reach the crest, the road from LN 19.5 is a lot easier.

5.3 **West Side Road.** Road S, across from a white water tank N. Runs 5.3 miles to the border (clearly marked). According to the map it then continues within the Restricted Zone along the west side of the Groom Range to the old Groom Mine. This road is maintained for ranch access to a water tank about a mile beyond the border. Road is rough and minimally maintained but is navigable by most cars.

8.3 **Southwest Corner Road.** The dirt track S is a rugged 4WD road that runs about 4.4 miles south-southwest to intersect the restricted zone (clearly marked). From there, you can walk about 3/4 mile along the fence line to "Southwest Corner," the point where two segments of the border come together at a right angle. There are no viewing locations for Groom Lake or Emigrant Valley along this road or at Southwest Corner. However, because this area is directly in line with the Groom Lake runway, this could be a good location to watch secret aircraft passing overhead.

10.2 Another maintained road joins this one at an angle from the north. This other road leads north to SR-375 at LN 2.8.

A few feet beyond this junction, there is a barbed wire fence line and yellow-striped posts on either side of the road—but no signs—about 0.1 m before the guard house. Contrary to prior reports in this *Viewer's Guide*, these posts do *not* mark the border. You can continue beyond the posts and drive up to within a few feet of the guard house if you wish.

10.3 **North Gate guard shack.** This is the northern entrance to Area 51. The guard house itself is a small portable structure housing a cammo man.

LN 10.2 Maintained dirt road N, leads around the derelict mill visible from road. In front of the mill is a shed covered with earth. This is a bomb shelter, built to protect the mill workers from the U.S. military, which used to be much less precise in its practice bombing runs. The bomb shelter is now the occasional home of Ray the hayloader.

LN 10.1 **Town of Rachel.** (Sometimes spelled "Rachael.") Elevation 4970 feet. Population: About 30 families, or about 100 people total. Hardly a Gotham or Metropolis, just a scatter of mobile homes with the only paved roads being 375 and the frontage road beside it. "Town" is rather a strong word, and you need a keen eye to even notice Rachel as you pass by it. Nonetheless, it looks like the Emerald City to anyone who has been wandering in the desert for a while.

Community Services. Rachel is the home of two tiny commercial establishments: The Quik Pick gas station/convenience store/RV park and the Little A'Le'Inn restaurant/bar/ motel/RV park/Laundromat/UFO headquarters, each described below. Behind Quik Pik is a "Senior Thrift Store," selling used clothing (open Tues. & Weds only, 9-12 am and 1-2 pm). No post office, bank or other superfluous conveniences. If you want to send a letter, put it into one of the mailboxes along the highway and put up the little red flag. There are EMTs in town but no other medical care. Rachel has one tiny church, the Rachel Baptist Mission, which, as you might have guessed, is housed in a mobile home. Local residents do their shopping about once a month in Las Vegas, 150 miles away, and the kids go to school in Alamo, a 50 mile bus ride each way.

Entertainment. There is no direct TV reception in this valley, although residents can get some Las Vegas TV stations via a solar powered repeater above Coyote Summit. There is no FM radio reception at all, but you can get good AM reception from all over the West at night. No daily newspapers are available here, unless someone happens to bring one from Vegas. There are also no legal brothels in town; if you seek that kind of traditional Nevada entertainment,

[47] Apparently, its construction was part of the mitigation measures agreed to by the Air Force at the time of the Groom Range land withdrawal.

[48] Once again, science spoils the fun: My companions and I measured the hole by lowering a flashlight into it on a fishing line. The flashlight hit bottom (or at least seemed to) at about 150 yards, which is the approximate depth of the water table in this location. This hole was probably a water well, needed for the water-intensive mining operations seen at various points along the road. That rocks seem to ping forever when dropped down the hole is probably due to reverberations.

you've have to go to Tonopah or Ely.[49] In summary, there ain't much in the way of local entertainment in Rachel aside from hanging out at the Little A'Le'Inn and drinking beer.

Economy. A couple of Rachel residents are employed at the "Test Site," which is the local term referring collectively to the Nevada Test Site, the Nellis Range, Area 51 and any other restricted installation "over there." You will have a hard time getting these people to talk about their work or about what lies beyond the boundary, and it is considered rude to ask.[50] Other residents work for the local cattle ranches or the hay farm. Still others are retired, unemployed or are full-time eccentrics,[51] and most of the rest work for Quik-Pick or the Inn. Mining, once Rachel's mainstay, is pretty much gone now.

Daily Events. School bus leaves Rachel at 6:30. Mail comes at 12:00. School bus comes back at 3:45. The UPS man, the local equivalent of Santa Claus, comes in the afternoon. Most weekdays in Rachel are punctuated by loud aircraft activity and many earth-shaking sonic booms, which sometimes knock pictures off the wall and send fragile family heirlooms flying off their shelves. Rachel residents take it all in stride and hardly seem to notice the explosions and ominous rumbles that send visitors running for cover. (If the booms cause any damage, residents can file a claim with the Air Force and receive prompt compensation.) Jet activity happens at regular intervals on weekdays: It seems like there are three shows a day: one in the morning, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. There is very little air activity on weekends or holidays.

Annual Event. The population of Rachel balloons four to six fold for Rachel Day, the annual town celebration held the first Saturday of April. The festival starts with a parade at 11am, continues with games and booths in the field across from the Inn and ends with a dance and classic drunk resulting in a few hundred hangovers on Sunday morning.

Political Life. Rachel is a diverse place welcoming people of all political persuasions as long as they are not Liberal. To help you know which of your opinions to express and which to keep to yourself, I have assembled this brief guide to political correctness in Rachel: Capital punishment—absolutely, for all violent crimes, no appeal. Guns—every adult American citizen should be required to own at least two. Environmentalists—taste as good cooked as roast Spotted Owl. Rush Limbaugh—hero of the people. Bill Clinton—not spoken of except concerning incestuous relations with his mother and the illegitimacy of his birth. George Bush—never spoken of at all. Federal government—vehemently cursed and despised. State government—moderately cursed and despised. County government—mildly cursed and despised. People employed by the Federal, state or county governments—loved, as long as they are physically present in town.[52]

As an indication of the local political winds, during the Branch Davidian standoff in Waco, Texas, in early 1993, local sentiments appeared to be firmly behind the cult leader, David Koresh. He and his followers were simply exercising their constitutional right to stockpile arms, and the Feds had no right to intervene. When the cult's compound finally burned to the ground, the instant and unshakable opinion of locals (or at least the loudest ones) was that the government deliberately started the blaze. The Waco incident provided proof positive of the government's master plan to take our guns and thereby launch the inevitable takeover of all the rest of our freedoms.

Crime and Punishment. Rachel has no local police. The only law in these parts is Smith and Wesson, supplemented by the Sheriff's substation in Alamo, 50 miles away. Needless to say, most residents have guns, and some of them have a *lot* of guns. If you happen to hear gunfire in the middle of the night, don't be alarmed; it's probably only the not-too-reassuring sound of drunks shooting at tin cans. Crime is rare here, but when it happens, it usually involves the use of alcohol.

Social Classes. At first glance, Rachel may appear like a democratic, classless place, but closer inspection reveals distinct social stratification. If you look carefully at the residences here, you can see that Rachel is divided very clearly into the "Haves" and "Have-Nots"—that is, people who have satellite dishes and those who have not one. People without satellite dishes insist that they don't really want one, that they are pleased to be free of the scourge of television and are perfectly content watching Channel 8 on sunny days when the repeater station is working. On the other hand, people with satellite dishes insist that they don't watch *that* much television and could get along perfectly well without it if they had to. These classes *do* talk to each other and may even occasionally intermarry, but the topic of television is rarely discussed across social lines.

Sacred Cows. If you visit any big city in India, like Delhi or Bombay, you will find cattle wandering the streets at will, even in downtown areas. There, the cow is regarded as the highest form of earthly life, and it is considered a sin to fence them in or disturb them in any way. A similar situation applies in Rachel. The cattle are free to wander the town's streets and backyards as they please, and there will be hell to pay with the rancher should harm come to any of them. Unfortunately, this is not India, and there is no class of "Untouchables" here eager to scoop up the manure and sell it for fuel. Therefore, you must watch your step at all times.

History. There has been a settlement in this vicinity since at least 1905, when "Sand Spring" appeared on a Lincoln

[49] You could say that Lincoln County, where Rachel is located, is part of Nevada's moralistic "Bible Belt," the sort of place where they have building codes and laws against prostitution. Elsewhere in the state the philosophy seems to be, "Anything you want to do."

[50] Residents and visitors who have asked even the most innocuous question about a person's work on the other side of the border typically hear the old saw: "If I told you that, I'd have to kill you." This quip is so often repeated and sometimes seems so strained that one gets the impression that there is genuine fear behind it. Stories abound of people being blabbermouths by nature and getting so drunk that they seem to lose all reserve, yet still never saying one peep about their work at the Test Site.

[51] Including one UFO researcher.

[52] Actually, I am not sure if these are the opinions of the population at large or just those of Joe Travis, whose voice is louder than anybody else's.

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County map.[53] The present town site appears to be entirely modern, however, and few people have lived here more than ten years. Unlike many of the surrounding ghost towns, no buildings in Rachel are more than 40 years old, and most are moveable. The present location of this "mobile home park" is owed to the proximity of the mines on Tempiute Mountain, the presence of the paved highway and the availability of water underground. (In contrast, the Tikaboo Valley next door has almost no accessible ground water.) The present town was never formerly founded but only started appearing on maps when the number of mobile homes attained critical mass to be recognized.[54] Rachel reached its peak population of about 100 families in the 1970s when several local mines were in operation. It had a one-room schoolhouse then, but lost it when the mines were closed. Formerly known by whatever cussed name you chose to give it, it became Rachel in the 1980s in honor of the first child born here, Rachel Jones.[55]

LN 10.1 **Quik Pik Convenience Store/Gas Station/Mobile Home Park.** Sells unleaded gas for about 25 cents higher than the price in Las Vegas. Credit cards accepted, with 6¢/gallon surcharge. Fuel up here, since nearest gas is 110 miles W (at Tonopah) and 45 miles E. (at Ash Springs). The Quik Pik convenience store is no-frills but has enough basic groceries to keep you alive. Area 51 Viewers Guide available here. Restrooms. Ammo. Water is available from a faucet to the left of the store. Has 25 full-hookup RV spaces for about $7/night. Hours: Mon-Sat 7-7, Sun 8-7. (If you are in dire need of gas later in the evening, the proprietors can usually be persuaded to open up the store for you. Ask at the Inn.) Phone (702) 729-2529.

In front and to the left of Quik Pik is a cluster of high tech equipment. This is a radiation monitoring station operated by the Environmental Protection Agency and common to many small towns surrounding the Nevada Test Site. It is as well-documented as the Batcave, with signs telling what each device is. An amusing little sidelight to history is that Rachel was once in the direct theoretical fallout path of the majority of the nuclear bomb tests at the Nevada Test Site. Since most residents haven't lived here more than a decade, it is hard to say whether there have been any medical effects. Nuclear testing is currently suspended, and according to all official accounts and the EPA meters the area is safe.[56]

LN 10.0 **Area 51 Research Center.** The northern office of this reporter. Located in a mobile home on the Frontage Road beside the highway, two doors down from the gas station. Visitors welcome when we are open. Hours are irregular—but a staff members is usually here on weekday mornings. (I am here only on weekends; I spend most of my time in Las Vegas.) Nothing much goes on here now except management of the mail order business selling documents relating to Area 51. Authorized USGS map dealer. A library of UFO, military and geographic reference books is available for free perusal. PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001. (702) 729-2648.

LN 9.7 **Little A'Le'Inn.** (Pronounced "Little Alien.") A tiny restaurant/bar/motel featured in the Weekly World News[57]: "Space Aliens Hang Out at Nevada Bar" (Reproduced in appendix.) This is a special part of the world where all the UFO and conspiracy stories are real and every alien is accepted for who he claims to be. I have been banned from the Inn myself, having long ago parted ways with the management, Pat and Joe Travis. It is a fun stop for newcomers, but you wouldn't want to live there. (I did for a few months until thrown out by Joe in a drunken rage.) It is also the only food and lodging on Highway 375, and a fair deal on both counts. Please note that because I cannot visit the Inn myself—out of fear for my life—the information below could be dated.

Services. The Inn (or "Bar" as it is known locally) is open 7 days from 8 am to 10 pm. Food is "the best in town" (i.e. "only"): Alien Burgers, etc. Breakfasts and full dinners available all day (until the kitchen closes at 9 pm). Full dinners range from $5.00 to $8.00. Lodging: about 12 motel rooms in mobile homes out back at $25 single, $30 double. Don't come here for the luxious accommodations: Each mobile home contains 2 to 4 rooms with thin walls sharing a common bathroom and living room. (The accommodations can be amusing, if you are in the mood, because you never know who you'll be living with, but if you prefer anonymity, lodging in Alamo, Tonopah, Caliente or Las Vegas may be more to your liking.) There is a VCR in each building and the Inn has a collection of pirated entertainment tapes that can be borrowed by guests for free, including a growing number on UFOs. The Inn has several RV hookups at $8 per night. There are pay phones both inside and out. Rest rooms. Laundry facilities.

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[53] That map is on display in the waiting room at the Caliente train station.

[54] At least on the official state map. You still won't find it in most road atlases. The nearby ghost town of Tempiute (Lincoln Mine) appears more often.

[55] Rachel died at the age of three, apparently after the town was named in her honor. Her family had moved to Washington State shortly after her birth, and there she succumbed to respiratory failure linked to the Mount St. Helens eruption.

[56] No, really. You can dispute, if you wish, that this area is truly "safe," but the residents seem generally a healthy lot and no one I have talked to knows of any cases of cancer in town that could be linked to radiation. (The cancers were in other towns in Lincoln County, which were occupied in the 50s.) Certainly, you have nothing to worry about if you are here for only a few days.

[57] May 17, 1994.

Visa/MasterCard accepted. Phone: (702) 729-2515. Mail Address: HCR Box 45, Rachel, NV 89001. (The "HCR" stands for "Highway Contract Route.")

On Display. UFO memorabilia and photos are prominently displayed on the walls, a sort of mini-museum but without much explanation. Includes shots of reported UFOs taken in the vicinity of the Black Mailbox. Most can be explained as military flares, internal lens reflections or routine aerial lights taken with a shaking camera. On one wall are autographed photos of UFO luminaries and hangers-on. (The photos of the hangers-on are usually bigger and prettier.) Bob Lazar, George Knapp and John Lear are represented here alongside *two* publicity photos of a charlatan named Sean Morton, one with him sitting under a pyramid below the caption "World's Foremost UFO Researcher." A few UFO photos on the wall are interesting, but they were not taken in Nevada and do not include sufficient info to find out more.

Ambiance. At the Inn, Pat Travis does the work, aided by a growing army of locals paid slightly above minimum wage. Joe Travis tends bar, drinks and provides continuous political commentary and analysis. Any discussion of UFOs eventually turns to the secret "New World Order," headed by the U.N., that is plotting to take away first our guns then the rest of our rights. The Inn is generally not the place to pick up reliable information about UFOs or the local area, since Joe and Pat rarely leave the inn except to go to Vegas and have never visited the viewpoints overlooking Groom Lake. Some visitors, following Joe's instructions, have wandered across the military border and been arrested.

Souvenirs. The Inn does a brisk business in stolen merchandise, selling patches, hats, books and bumper stickers ripped off from other sources, often with explicit copyright violations. The chinsy patch and hat are an unauthorized reproduction (slightly rearranged) of the design produced by Jim Goodall and myself. The bumper sticker design was stolen from the International UFO Center in Orlando, Florida. The Inn even sells a reworded version of this *Viewer's Guide*, differing only in the acceptance of most the lights-in-the-sky claims. The inn does an enormous business at hefty mark-up with average Mom-and-Pop tourists, who feel that they have not arrived at a place until they have dumped eighty or a hundred bucks on things to take home. This financial success, in turn, lets the propriators throw their political weight around and dictate terms to the rest of the community. I definitely recommend the you visit the inn if passing by, but before you spend any money there be sure that their political philosophy is one you want to be supporting.

Events. The Inn sponsors a UFO conference about twice a year—dubbed "Loonfests" by more cynical visitors. For $100 a head (in May 1995) you get a weekend of chuckwagon meals, some conspiracy-oriented speakers and the right to pitch your tent nearby. The most recent of these events have been poorly attended, however, due to the high price and lack of big names.

Personal Notes. Prior to the UFO craze, the place was called the "Rachel Bar and Grill," and it had a series of owners, none of whom could make it work. When the Travis's bought it around 1988, it was a failing establishment in a dying mining town (Rachel). The Travis's should have failed, too, but like a miracle from the skies the UFO watchers started arriving. When the Lazar story hit in late 1989, the inn was flooded with city slickers with fat wallets looking for flying saucers and related souvenirs, but the boom gradually faded when the Lazar story faltered and the UFO community began to lose interest.

When I first arrived in town in Feb. 1993, the Inn was again dying. I wrote the first editions of the *Viewer's Guide* and began to apply the science of public relations to the secret Groom Lake base, which I felt cried out for attention. Soon, the Inn was booming again, and I felt good about it. For seven months, I lived in a camper in an RV site behind the Inn, paid my rent and got along fine with Pat and Joe, referring to them as "Ma and Pa." I felt that we were serving a mutual interest. Then, on Aug. 28, 1993, at 10:30 pm, I was awakened by someone pounding on the door of my camper. It was Joe, very drunk.

"Glenn Campbell, you get the fuck out of here."

I jumped out of bed, knowing the score immediately. Joe was a man with a *lot* of guns and was probably packing one, so he was not to be taken lightly. "I'm going, I'm going," I said through the door. "Any particular reason?"

"Because I hate you, you bald faced fucker."

I couldn't argue with that logic. Joe graciously gave me fifteen minutes to leave the compound. I quickly threw on some clothes and got away as quickly as possible. After several days in the desert, making cautious forays to town, I realized that the situation was terminal, and I decided to move into a mobile home at the other end of Rachel. This became the Area 51 Research Center. I knew that Joe's blow-up was a short-lived occurrence, triggered by whatever trivial incident sets drunks off. (It's a long story requiring an alcoholic's logic.) What sealed my expulsion was the change in Pat. After Joe's explosion, Pat came to his defense and over the next weeks assembled the retroactive reasoning for her husband actions. "Glenn was trying to take over our business," she said over and over to anyone within earshot, and a conspiracy began to emerge which classified me as a government agent. My own explanation is different: I had become part of the family and thus became subject to the self-destructive impulses that some families have.

I was formally banned from the Inn for recording the incident above in an early version of this *Viewer's Guide*. People often ask me why I don't become more diplomatic and try to patch things up. I have learned, from prior personal experiences, that the only way to deal with an abusive situation is to remove myself from it, but my absence in turn seems to generate even more rage from the Inn—about my alleged sexual preferences (running the gamut of children and beasts), alleged employment as a government agent (specifically the USGS, if you are familiar with that sinister agency),

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alleged employment as a Soviet spy (at the same time I am working for the U.S. government) and whatever other insinuations could be offered without proof. For no other reason but malice, they ripped off my patch, my hat and my *Viewer's Guide*, and they continue to steal any other new idea I come up with. The "Little A'Le'Inn Library," a bookshelf in the back of the inn was my idea, although my books have been replaced by conspriracy tracts. That's my sign and my bookshelf! If there is such a thing as evil, this is it.

The Travis's are simple folk who do not understand marketing or diplomacy and have no comprehension of any of the intellectual graces. They are like gamblers who have hit a random jackpot and feel it their special charm which made it happen. As reported in the *Weekly World News*—accurately it seems—the Inn is protected by an alien named Archibald who only Pat can sense. Any good fortune the Inn experiences must be the result of Archibald's intervention or the Travis's own native charm and therefore must have nothing to do with Campbell. In this situation, as in any other dysfunctional relationship, I feel that the best thing I can do is get out and stay out. My separation from the Inn was sealed when they started selling the ripped off patch. At that point I stopped selling them my *Viewer's Guide* and insert the text above They, in turn, engaged their own Area 51 expert Chuck Clark ("Forrest Gump" to us) to create a new facsimile, rearranging the info in my book to be more pro-UFO.

You may encounter Chuck at the inn, a cheerful fellow, though dim, who is completely loyal to the Travis's. He is one of the handful of true believers who actually return more than once to the establishment. Another regular is Kathleen Ford from Las Vegas, who has taken many photos of UFOs at the Black Mailbox. You can find some of them on the wall: The most dramatic are magnesium flares used in military exercises; others appear to be internal lens reflections. A few of Kathleen's pictures of lights in the sky are without immediate explanation, but she is not open to any critical inquiry which might reveal what they are. Somewhere, behind the fantastic claims of the true believers, there might actually be some data, but getting to it, through the watcher's ideology and defensiveness, is nearly impossible.

LN 9.5 **Penoyer Farm Road.** S: Maintained dirt road leading to Penoyer Farms—owned by the Castletons—which grows hay and alfalfa with well water and dominates this end of Sand Spring Valley.

A few yards in on the Penoyer Farm Road, another road turns left (at a right angle to the highway). This eventually connects with Valley Road at Mile 1.8.

LN 9.1 **Pet Cemetery.** Final resting place of "Buck," the Travis' loyal pooch and a dear friend to many visitors. Buck was the sort of sport who would go anywhere and do anything with anyone who gave him some attention. He was picked up by the Travis's as a stray and endured no end of abuse from Joe, who called him stupid and threatened time and again to "shoot the son-of-a-bitch." Fortunately, Buck understood no English (except the word "Buck") and remained forever true to his master. He lived to chase cows, catch lizards and ride in the truck with Joe, even if just down to the mailbox. Alas, he also had a fondness for chasing cars. Buck was killed here by traffic on April 25, 1993, and is buried about 20 feet from the pavement N, at a site marked by a cross and stones. Many gunslingers haven't been interred with such dignity.[58]

Behind Buck are the graves of his colleagues Flotsam and Jetsam. They were both part coyote, and at night that made so much howling racket that the owner was required to shoot them. Sounds like rough justice, but this is the West, and at least we gave 'em a decent burial.

LN 8.9 **Dump Road.** Maintained dirt road N, to a windmill and the Rachel town dump. Also provides access to the dry lake bed: Turn left at the windmill. [Easier access is at LN 6.1.] Sometime in the 80s, a Harrier jet crashed in this vicinity. Most of the debris has been cleaned up but small pieces can still be found. The site is 0.4 from the highway on Dump Road. Look for a small rock cairn on the right side of the road, then look for bits of debris.

LN 6.1 **Access Road to Sand Springs Lake.** Dirt road N leads 1.7 miles to the dry lake bed, a vast expanse of concrete-like mud that's a fun place to tool around on in whatever dragster you happen to be driving. The road to the lakebed is sandy, but passable by cars at a brisk pace. (Never in wet weather!) Once you reach the lake bed, you'll find a wide plain of flat nothingness, the local equivalent of Bonnieville Salt Flats. Be sure to note where you entered the lake bed, because it is so vast that it can be hard to find your way out. The surface may be okay for sailboarding, although it is a rough in places, but it is ideal for drag racing or any kind of motor sport. Driving around on it has the surreal quality of a video game. You can push the pedal to the metal in the middle of the lake, while along the edges isolated bushes provide obstacles to weave through. Watch out for a couple of foot-high pipes sticking out of the lake bed. (They hold survey markers.) Again, do not attempt to drive here if you see any indication of mud. There can be water in this lake in the winter and spring. Best time to drive here is usually summer and fall.

LN 4.1 **Gunderson Road.** Maintained dirt road N to northern end of Sand Spring valley and beyond. Okay for most vehicles, although the sand can be treacherous at places. Leads 26.7 miles to the junction with a maintained BLM road just north of the Worthington Mountains.

LN 3.4 Water tower N.

LN 2.8 Maintained and heavily used road running 8.7 miles south to the northern entrance of the Groom Lake facility. Sandy and washboarded at last inspection; not nearly as easy to drive as Valley Road at LN 11.4.

LN 0.5 N: Dirt track north. Leads about 5 miles to west side of Flat Top (see NY 45.7). High clearance required.

LN 0

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[58] Buck was buried by me, not by Joe, who would just as soon take him to the dump.

NY 49.5 **County line: Lincoln and Nye counties.** A good view site for the airspace above Groom Lake. From this spot, I saw two glowing orbs rise above the horizon. [See "Magnesium Flares" in FLYING OBJECT IDENTIFIER.] Wide gravel parking area N. This location is marked by a "Nye County" sign westbound, but no sign eastbound. The county line itself is marked by several posts on either side of the road.

Mileposts below are in Nye County, measured from the start of Highway 375 at Warm Springs.

NY 47.8 Easy to miss dirt track S.. Leads about 0.2 mile into a deep sand pit, hidden from the road. This makes a good camping spot: sheltered from the wind, hidden from the road and having flat, sandy soil ideal for pitching a tent; however, it also offers no view in any direction but up. Any vehicle can make it to the sandpit in dry weather.

NY 45.8 **Queen City Summit**, elevation 5960. On the ridge separating the Sand Spring Valley from the Railroad Valley.

NY 45.7 Dirt road N, leads to an interesting network of small roads, some mining remnants and a good camping spot overlooking the Sand Spring Valley. This road also provides access for a hike of **Flat Top**, a mountain offering a direct but very distant view into the northern Emigrant Valley. According to the map, you should be able to see at least the periphery of Groom Lake, but my own visit to the summit could not confirm this due to haze. Because of the 50 mile distance, you would need a telescope and a very clear day to see anything. Early morning is best.

This is an interesting mountain to climb with or without a view of Groom. As seen from Rachel, Flat Top (my own name) is the flat topped mountain just to the right of Queen City Summit. On USGS maps, this is the unnamed peak (elevation 7087 feet) about one mile south of Black Top Mountain. The hike to the top takes 1-2 hours each way and is comparable in difficulty to White Sides. To reach the starting point, follow the dirt road N from this milepost, bearing right at each fork. This road becomes rutted and sandy, but it is navigable by most vehicles. About 0.7 mile from the highway, the road reaches a crest from which you can see the Sand Spring Valley and Rachel, as well as a solar powered transmitter to the right.[59] Park here at the crest. This is a good camping spot, flat and with a good view in two directions. (Unfortunately, the Groom Lake direction is cut off by hills, although you could probably hike to a better spot in about 15 minutes.)

For the hike up Flat Top, backtrack down the road a few feet to the previous fork, then follow the left road until it ends on a hillside. From there, climb to the top of the non-rocky ridge ahead and to the left. From the top of that ridge, the mountain you see ahead is Flat Top. Cross the connecting ridge to the base, then head straight up. At the top, you will find a solar powered microwave station erected by the Air Force. The summit is very spacious and ideally suited for camping. Could also be a good aircraft viewing location (on weekdays).

NY 44.4 Dirt track N. Passable by cars, with caution. Leads to a network of mining roads covering the nearby hills. One of these roads continues back to the highway at NY 42.1. (Look for an overgrown road right about 0.8 mi. from start.) At about 0.7 mi. from start, a road leads to the base of Flat Top Mtn. (See NY 45.7).

NY 43 This milepost is the approximate edge of Railroad Valley, named for a railroad franchise once granted here but never built. Railroad Valley has no railroad; in fact, it ain't got nothin'—only a ranch (abandonned) and dry lake bed. The only active human outpost in this vicinity is the Cedar Gate of the Nellis Range. Since there is nobody much to complain—and no sound restrictions like there are supposed to be in Rachel—military jets often fly through at low level while on maneuvers.

NY 43.6 Maintained, well-traveled, 2-lane dirt road S. Leads 8.2 mi. to the abandoned Cedar Pipeline Ranch and 5.0 miles beyond to the Cedar Gate of the Nellis Air Force Range. You can see the entire road to the ranch, gate and Cedar Pass in the distance. The ranch consists of a half-dozen wooden buildings in pretty good condition: worth exploring if you are interested in ghost settlements. From the ranch, there is a maintained but often rough road north, behind the Reveille Range, to rejoin 375 at NY 0.8. This detour of about 43 miles is possible for cars but might take two hours; it is faster to backtrack to the paved hwy. (You'll need the Cactus Flat 1:100,000 topo map for this route.) Another road south from the ranch leads 2.6 mi. to an unmanned gate of the Nellis Range (locked).

At 1.6 mi from the paved hwy, A derelict house is visible alone on a ridge about a mile south. I find the location curious. It reminds me of the isolated suburban homes built for "Survival Town" on the Nuclear Test Site, just so they could blow them up.

The junction of this road and the paved hwy. is a good viewing location for both day and night military activity. In the clear desert skies, aircraft operating above this valley might easily be seen from the Black Mailbox about 35 miles away. In the daytime, I have counted as many as a dozen aircraft at once performing extreme maneuvers in Railroad Valley, which could make an impressive UFO-like show when seen from afar at night.

NY 42.2 Dirt track N. Passable by cars, with extreme caution. Forks about 1 to 2 mi. from hwy., main road left leads 3 mi. further to a spring. Road right leads about 2 mi. to rejoin hwy. at NY 44.4.

NY 22.0 Road S to Reveille (a ghost town or abandoned mining operation). Locals say you can go across the range in a 4WD but that the road is very difficult.

NY 15.9 Maintained dirt road to Nyala (a ranch) and Adaven (in the Humboldt National Forest). For experienced adventurers with 4WDs, a loop through Cherry Canyon and Adaven and back to Hwy. 375 near Rachel (or 318 near Hiko) makes a fairly interesting day trip (summer only). (See Quinn Canyon Range 1:100,000 USGS map.)

From here, highway runs through a wide, level pass through volcanic buttes. Leaving Railroad Valley.

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[59] A USGS seismic detector, broadcasting on 163.8 MHz. On the radio, received as a steady tone that fluctuates as you walk toward the ground sensor.

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NY 15.2 The highway crosses a reservoir with water in it. The water comes from Warm Springs, channelled through a network of drainage ditches. Many ditches in the Railroad Valley suggest that there was once an elaborate water distribution system here.

Easy-to-miss dirt road just E of reservoir, heading S (across the hwy. from the dam). This is an interesting high clearance track leading up into the Reveille Range. Road snakes through narrow valleys and past rocky pinnacles. I turned back at 4.7 miles due to winter snows; it is worth further exploration.

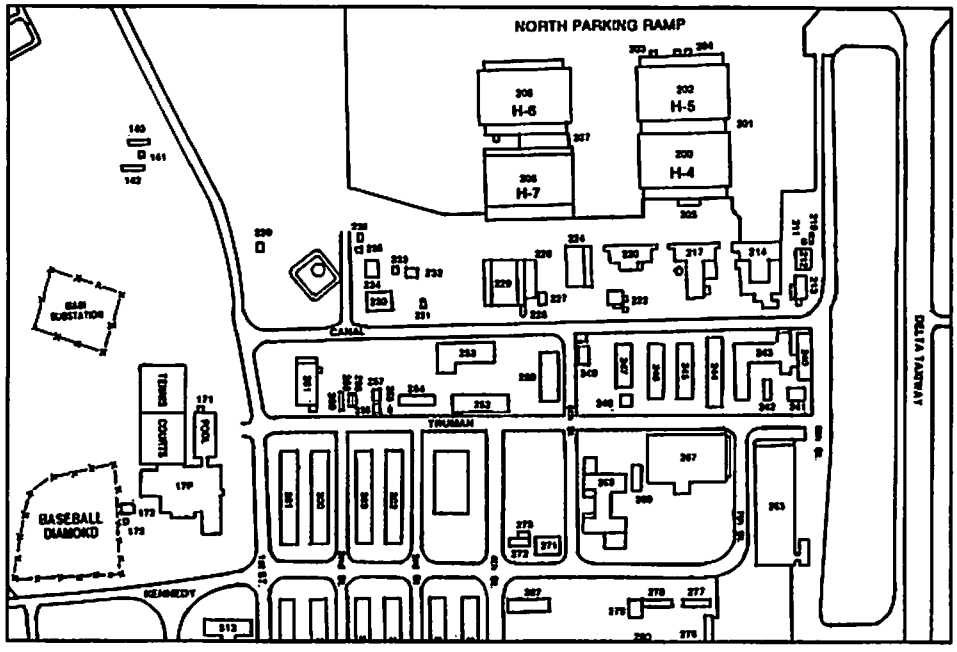
NY 11.2 Maintained road to Twin Springs (1 mile) and Blue Jay (15 miles). Twin Springs is the ranch you see just over yon, owned by the Fallini's. According to the map, this road connects with US-6 about 15-20 miles N.

From here to the end of SR-375 at Warm Springs, you may have difficulty reading the mile markers. Most of these small signs are either missing or are folded up mysteriously from the bottom. This phenomenon puzzled us for some time. What sort of dark alien force or sicko human would engage in such senseless vandalism? Sinister theories circulated in our heads until someone at the State Highway Dept. set us straight. The culprits are Fallini's cattle, who use the signs as scratching posts and crumple them like foil.

NY 0 **Warm Springs.** The name says it all—a steaming aqueduct of water flowing down from a hillside. No human life here, but plenty of memories. The remaining buildings are owned by the Fallinis of Twin Springs. The Warm Springs Bar & Cafe is permanently shuttered, although there is a working pay phone out front, the only one for miles. The water from the spring flows down to a pool and derelict bath house with a "Keep Out" spray painted on it. A new fence makes the pool absolutely inaccessible. The spring itself is worth exploring: It comes out of the ground very hot about 1000 feet away on the hillside, then runs through a man made channel to the bath house. In the area surrounding the junction there are several old buildings and a stone corral of some antiquity. This was once a major stagecoach stop.

At this junction, 375 ends (or begins) at U.S. Route 6. Go west on US-6 for Tonopah (49 miles) and Bishop (151 mi). Go east for Ely (119 mi), Delta (273 mi) and the ghost towns of Tybo and Hot Creek (access road at Basecamp, 9.5 mi).

Along US-6 to Ely, you pass the mystery airfield at Basecamp (about 9.5 mi from 375). Basecamp is tiny military facility supporting an auxiliary runway, visible from US-6. Its mission is unknown to us, but F-117s (Stealth fighters) have been seen performing touch-and-go landings here. Turn W. at Basecamp for the ghost towns of Tybo and Hot Creek (not visited). Roads off US-6 also lead to Ground Zero for an underground atomic blast and to Lunar Crater, a volcanic cauldera. (See details in Day Excursions section.)



Portion of inner area of base, from Groom Lake Map Set available from Area 51 Research Center

Tikaboo Peak Guide
By Tom Mahood and Glenn Campbell

There is at least one viewpoint that is unaffected by the latest land withdrawal. It is Tikaboo Peak, a side peak of Badger Mtn. just south of Hancock Summit. Compared to White Sides and Freedom Ridge Tikaboo Peak is marred by its distance from the base (about 26 miles vs. about 12-13 miles for White Sides and Freedom Ridge). However, the mountain itself is much more interesting than the closed viewpoints; offering a scenic hike and a fine vista at the top.

From the top you see, in the far distance, what looks like an ordinary Air Force base. You can make out only a few hangars with the naked eye, but you can see much more with binoculars or telescope. The base itself is mostly of interest to military aviation buffs. To the average citizen, the most interesting aspect of the base is the fact that the government won't talk about it.

Warnings:

—This is not a hike for couch potatoes. It is a strenuous, hike-altitude exercise.

—You cannot make this hike in the winter. Snow can last through April. Best time to hike is in the summer.

—The road to the trailhead is very remote. Any car can make it, but make sure you have enough supplies to hike back to the highway in case you break down.

TIKABOO WARNINGS. As more people attempt the hike to Tikaboo Peak to see the nonexistant base, we need to issue some public service warnings. If you are not in good physical shape, you will die on this hike. If you try to hike at night, you will also die. In the winter, your car will get stuck in snow or mud before you reach the trailhead and you will die right there, miles from help. You could die if you miss the trail markers and get lost, and you could die from a lightning strike at the exposed summit. At 8000 feet, you could die from cold, wind and exposure most of the year. If you have never hiked a similar peak, do not attempt this one unless you are with a group. Any experienced alpine hiker should have no trouble with Tikaboo, but a lot of visitors are not going to be prepared for it. Freedom Ridge was enough of a danger to the ill-prepared; Tikaboo could actually kill a few.

The hike from Badger Spring to the top is approximately 2 hours up and 1 hour down. It can be very strenuous for people who are out of shape, but experienced alpine hikers would consider it only "moderately difficult." The mountain is pleasantly forested on this side and the view from the top is expansive—a worthwhile hike even without a secret base. Most of the buildings at the Groom base are visible from Tikaboo Peak, with only a portion of the runway cut off. Visitors who are familiar with the well-publicized views from White Sides and Freedom Ridge may find the change of perspective interesting. Haze can a problem, as well as winds or cold temperatures at the top. Binoculars or a telescope are essential to make out any details of the base—the higher the power, the better.

Summer is the best time to make this hike. The area is inaccessible about November through March. You can hike in the Spring and Fall, but high winds and cold temperatures can make it uncomfortable.

The best time of the day to view the base is early in the morning, when the sun is behind you. In the afternoon, you are looking into the sun and the base is often washed out by the glare.

Access to Badger Spring is by an unmarked dirt road from milepost LN 32.2 on US-93 at the Pahranagat Wildlife Refuge (not the marked Wildlife Refuge road but an another road about a quarter mile north on US-93, marked only by a stop sign). The 22-mile dirt road to Badger Spring is maintained and passable by sturdy cars, but a four wheel drive would take you about 1/2 mile further. (You can walk it instead.) Tikaboo Peak is unnamed on the USGS 1:100,000 Pahranagat Range map, but the name is shown on the 1:24,000 Badger Spring Map.

Tikaboo Peak, elevation 7,908', is about a mile and a half southwest of Badger Mountain. The only map that labels the peak as "Tikaboo" is the 7.5 minute Badger Spring quadrangle; it is unlabeled on others. Tikaboo is one of the peaks on the east side of Tikaboo Valley about 5 1/2 miles southeast of the hwy. 375/Groom Lake Road intersection, but it is not easily accessible from that side. The best approach is via a maintained dirt roads from US-93 south of Alamo which take you through the remove Badger Valley to an elevation about 1000-1500 feet below the peak. The top end of this road is not accessible in winter, when

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Tikaboo Peak becomes inaccessible due to snow.

Apart from the disappointingly tiny appearance of the base, the view from the peak is nothing short of stunning, a full 360 degrees. The altitude allows you to see completely across the Groom area and across the Nevada Test Site. The view of the airspace over the entire facility and the Nevada Test Site is unobstructed. It's even possible to see "CP-1," the operational control complex for nuclear blasts. Looking towards Papoose Lake, the sightline is blocked only by the Fallout Hills about halfway between. Even so, the airspace becomes fully visible at only 800' above the Papoose lake bed. To the south, Desert Dry Lake within the National Wildlife Range is visible, as is Mt. Charleston near Las Vegas. To the north, Queen City summit may be seen, and almost visible is Rachel.

One of the more entertaining activities available at this spot is the ability to turn the tables on the Cammo Dudes and spy on them for a change. You can spot them lurking down below in the desert at hiding places not visible from Groom Lake Road. At this lofty location, you are insulated from them, apparently well outside of their sphere of influence.

For the scanner buffs, this is radio heaven. You have a radio line of sight to anything in the air and to portions of three states on the ground—Nevada, California, Utah. Cellular telephones work here, too. If you're a ham radio operator, a wide variety of 2 meter repeaters can also be reached from the summit.

Getting There

Access is from the east off Hwy. 93 at two locations, one on each side of Alamo. The route forms a loop which we have named the Badger Valley Loop. (To our knowledge none of these dirt roads has a name). At about the middle of this loop, at a point we have named Badger Spring Junction, a road goes north to Badger Spring (a cattle watering hole) and beyond that to a saddle below Tikaboo Peak.

Although the entire loop is "bladed" and minimally maintained, the northern part of the loop can be difficult for cars due to some very steep grades. Thus, the southern route is recommended for most visitors. Both roads should be avoided in inclement weather, but the northern route is far more deadly when it turns to mud. Extreme caution should be used by used by all motorists due to the remoteness of the area you will be visiting. Make sure you have the equipment you need to survive should you break down, because there is almost no daily traffic on these roads, and it could be a 22 mile hike back to civilization.

Detailed route descriptions follow. A recommended scenic route for 4WDs is to enter via the southerly access, and after sampling the peak, exit at through the more spectacular northerly end of the loop.

Vehicular Considerations

For a stress free trip, a four wheel drive vehicle is the best choice, but most cars can also make it to Badger Spring. (We drove up there in a low sports car once, but it was a rental; we wouldn't do it if it was ours.) If you travel by car, you must keep in mind the risks involved—primarily getting stuck in sand or mud—and plan for the worst. The 1/2 mile extension past Badger Spring to the saddle campsite should be attempted only with four wheel drives.

This is real backcountry travel. Ideally, there should be more than one vehicle in your party in case of problems. If you must travel in a single vehicle, bring plenty of food and water along and a sleeping bag warm enough to get you through the night if you get stuck. Also, bring a shovel in case you need to dig yourself out or rebuild the road.

Don't consider this trip if there's a chance of rain. Portions of these roads will turn to a glop that even a four wheel drive can't get through. The northerly portion of the Badger Valley loop is particularly bad when wet. The abrupt drop-offs along this portion of road are very dangerous if you're sliding down the grades. If you are in the area when rain unexpectedly strikes, either get out quickly or plan on spending time there until the roads dry. The south portion of the Badger Valley loop is the safest exit.

Note: The routes into this area cross through several gates. It is legal to pass through these gates, since this is still public land, but the law dictates the gate should be left as you found it. That means if the gate is closed, close it after you pass through. This area is a grazing range for cattle.

Weather

At Badger Spring and above, you're not in the desert anymore. The campsite saddle is at almost 7,000' and Tikaboo Peak is almost 8,000'. It is much colder here than in the valleys below and the weather can get wild. In winter and early spring, snow is likely beyond Badger Spring Junction, making access almost impossible. Lightning storms are possible in mid to late summer. However, the elevation does provide an important benefit. In summer when it's sweltering down below, it will be pleasantly cool on Tikaboo.

A Note On The Route Descriptions

The following route descriptions assume you will be driving in from Hwy. 93. References to items on the right or left of your route should naturally be reversed if you are driving the route in reverse. When feasible or otherwise important, references are also given in the appropriate compass direction.

South Badger Valley Loop (Hwy. 93 Milepost 32.2 to Badger Spring Junction)

Safest route. This road is not as scenic as the northerly route, but the route is much safer and travel is usually fast (30 mph).

Mileage	*Comments*
0.00	Milepost 32.2, Hwy. 93. This turnoff to the west is marked only by a stop sign and easy to miss, so watch for it carefully using the milepost markers. It is 0.4 miles north of the marked entrance to the headquarters of the Pahranagat Wildlife Refuge. As soon as you turn off the highway, reset your trip counter odometer so you can keep track of mile points. For the first 18.7 miles, you simply follow the most traveled route. Note: The "No Jeep" signs here refer to the side tracks, not the main dirt road.
0.3	Road passes over a cattle guard leaving the Pahranagat Wildlife Refuge
5.2	The 4wd road on the right is a rough 2.3 mile shortcut that rejoins Badger Valley Road at the 11.8 milepost. While shorter, it takes more time due to its roughness. Still, it's a fun, moderate 4wd jaunt, otherwise, stay left.
5.9	Gate. Leave it in the state you found it—open or closed.
7.0	You reach a crest with a 4wd trace heading off to the right that in 1.5 miles joins the 4wd "shortcut" route between milepost 5.2 and 11.8. Very rough.
8.5	Here is a junction with the main route making a sharp turn to the right. Follow it right. This route is *not* shown correctly on either the 7 1/2 minute or 1:100,000 USGS maps of the area. (The fainter 4wd route on the left is shown and runs south through the Desert Wildlife Range, however a gate is reached in about a half mile at the Pahranagat Refuge boundary, and unauthorized vehicles are prohibited past there.)
11.8	You pass by a corral, and cattle watering tank, and a road coming in from the right.
13.3	A 4wd route comes in from the left (unexplored).
13.9	At this fork, stay left. The right fork goes to a cattle watering trough in 0.9 miles. It then continues as a 4wd reaching an abandoned prospect or mine about 2.2 miles from the fork.
15.0	If you look right (east) across Badger Valley, you'll see the previously mentioned mine located on the far valley wall. This valley wall is the East Pahranagat Range.
18.7	Badger Spring Junction. If you continue straight (northwest), you'll reach Badger Spring in 3.5 miles and the Tikaboo Saddle campsite beyond in 4 miles. [See route guide below for that segment]. A right turn here puts you on the northern half of the Badger Valley loop and back to Hwy. 93 north of Alamo in 16.5 miles.

North Badger Valley Loop (Richardville Road to Badger Spring Junction)

This is a very scenic "roller-coaster" route with outstanding vistas, but **4WD is recommended**. The route may be passable by sturdy cars but is best avoided by them due to some extreme grades. Road should not be attempted in winter or wet weather when slick mud can make it harrowing.

To get to this route, you need to exit US-93 onto Richardville Road at either LN 42.1 or LN 40.3 just north of Alamo. Richardville road runs parallel to US-93 on the west for a little over two miles. If you are coming from the north, turn right onto Richardville Road at milepost 42.1. The road will turn to the left and parallel Hwy. 93. 1.4 miles after leaving Hwy. 93, you come to an easy-to-miss "T" intersection with a paved road on

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the right heading west across the valley. Turn right here and reset your trip counter.

If you are coming from the south, turn left onto Richardville Road at milepost 40.3. The road will turn to the right and parallel Hwy. 93. 0.9 miles after leaving Hwy. 93, you will come to a "T" intersection with a paved road on the left, heading west across the valley. Turn left here and reset your trip counter.

Mileage	*Comments*
0.00	Junction with Richardville Road
0.20	Unmarked Logan's Hardware Store on right (open Mon.-Sat.).
0.35	Pavement ends.
0.40	Fork: Keep right.
5.35	The limestone cliffs on the left contain numerous small caves. The biggest and most obvious was found (after an unexpectedly hair-raising climb) not to be very deep. Lots of use by animals. The others have not been explored yet.
5.75	Pass through a gate. Leave it as you found it—open or closed.
6.1	There are some ruins on the left (probably remnants of old mining activity) and a 4WD route on the right (unexplored).
6.5	You reach a crest with a good view off to the left of the Pahranagat Valley north of Alamo.
10.3	You reach a crest with three different ways to go. **Make a sharp turn right here!** (Going straight leads 1.1 miles to some radio repeaters.)
15.6	Badger Spring Junction. Turn right (northwest) to reach Badger Spring in 3.5 miles and the Tikaboo saddle campsite beyond in 4 miles. [See route guide below for that segment.] A left turn here puts you on the South Badger Valley loop back to Hwy. 93 in 18.7 miles.

Badger Spring Junction to Camp Site

Note: This road may be impassable in winter even to four-wheel drives. This road may also take a while to dry out in the spring; to be sure it is clear, wait until May 1. Otherwise, when dry, it should be passable by sturdy cars to Badger Spring, which is a satisfactory place to begin the hike.

0.00	Junction with Badger Loop.
3.5	Badger Spring and remnants of corral on left. The 4wd fork to the left ends shortly, just past the spring. Keep right and continue. Although the maps list the spring as dry, water is often observed in the cattle trough. This location serves as an alternate camp site and staging area for trips to Tikaboo. If you park in this area, you must, by law, to stay at least 100 yards from the watering trough. Only 4WDs should continue on the road from here.
3.85	Fork. Go left. Road climbs steeply up a deeply rutted road to the campsite at the saddle. This last 0.15 mile segment to the top is considered moderate to difficult four wheel driving. The start of this segment is as far as a crazed two wheel driver can make it. 4WD drivers with cold feet can also start your hike from here instead. The fork to the right ends in 0.20 miles at a lower saddle, with lots of camping room. The drawback to this location is that it's slightly lower and further away from the peak. Crazed two wheel drivers could probably make it however.
4.0	End of road—Saddle Campsite (elevation 6,970'). There is a clearing here in the midst of the cedars, junipers and pines, with room for several vehicles. (We have been scouting a road a road beyond this, so you may be able to go a little further toward the peak.) You cannot see Tikaboo Peak from the campsite, but the hill immediately to the north (behind you if you're facing Tikaboo) rises 160 feet above the saddle and provides a good view of the area and of the hiking route to Tikaboo. You may want to check out the route from this spot before starting up the main trail. Also from this hill you have a limited view down the canyon toward the northwest. Visible are portions of Groom Lake Road, the Medlin Ranch and Bald Mountain.

Hiking to Tikaboo Peak

If you are a rabid hiker in fantastic shape, you can make the hike from the Saddleback to the Peak in as little as a hour. Normal folks, taking their time and actually looking at and enjoying the scenery, may take two hours or more.

The trail is marked by rock cairns. To begin, head south from the campsite towards a "false" summit, staying right on top of the spine of the ridge that forms the saddle. After about 10-15 minutes, the slope steepens into a loose rockslide. It is easy to lose the cairns here, so follow them carefully. Keep a little

towards the right side of the slide. It's clearer and easier there. Don't go so far right that you get into the craggy, drop-off areas.

As you get within about 200' of the false summit, the cairns veer towards the right away from the slide, flattening out your climb. Your target is the tall rocky crag just above the left (east) side of the saddle between the false summit and Tikaboo Peak. You'll want to pass just above and to the left of the crag. Cross the saddle and start up the final slope of Tikaboo Peak. Climb 'til you can't climb no mo'!

If you follow the cairns route, you will come across an excellent campsite about 300' southeast of the summit. It's large, flat, with plenty of room for tents. The site is surrounded by trees and rocks, and is well sheltered. It is a better spot for camping on windy days or when there is a risk of lightning.

A little further and you've reached the top. You'll find various rock shelters in different stages of collapse, including a small religious shrine dedicated to "Our Lady of the Black Budget." There is sufficient room for a number of people to spend the night up here in reasonable comfort and in full view of the base, but get away from this high point quickly if you see lightning in the distance. Be careful about going too far to the west. There is a vicious drop-off behind the juniper bush!

"Groomstock 94" on Freedom Ridge, Aug. 1994

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Day Excursions

Following are some suggested day excursions from Rachel. Since most of them involve leaving the paved highway, topographic maps are suggested. [See MAPS.] Unless stated, all maps mentioned below are the detailed *USGS 7-1/2 Minute* maps. The destinations below are listed first by direction from Rachel, then by relative distance. For those marked "Not visited," please tell me what you find so I can update the description accordingly.

North and West of Rachel

Driving on the Sand Spring Dry Lake

The lake about three miles northwest of Rachel is the local equivalent of Bonnieville Salt Flats in the summer and fall. No matter what kind of vehicle you drive, you'll have a blast driving around here. See LN 6.1 for information.

Indian Caves

Shallow caves where Indians once camped at the south end of the Worthington Mountains. Said to be accessible by dirt roads about a 20 mile drive from Rachel. Maps: "Meeker Peak" (cave area) and "Worthington Peak SW" (access). On the "Meeker Peak" map, look for the stream bed running through a canyon about one mile due south of Meeker Peak itself.

High clearance required. From LN 11.7 or LN 10.2 on Hwy. 375, go about 3 miles north to a fork where there is a mailbox. Bear left and go past some ranch houses. Go about 8.7 miles further to a corral. Before the ruins of a stone house at the corral, turn right and follow the best road. About 2 miles from the corral, bear to the left on the lesser traveled road toward the hills. Road joins a stream bed and then enters a ravine. At the narrowest spot, look for the caves on either side of the road.

Leviathan Cave

These are extensive caverns high up in the Worthington Mountains, separate from the Indian Caves. The name ought to be a hint. This is said to be a world-class spelunker's cave that attracts the pros, about 20 miles north of Rachel. Unfortunately, it also supposed to be hard to get to, requiring a stiff hike up the mountain. There are said to be several entrances. The main entrance is a sinkhole with about a 20 foot drop at the entrance; unless you are good at free-hold rock climbing, you will need ropes to get into it. Some visitors claim that the cave is almost endless, but a more experienced spelunker has estimated the total length at about 1500 feet. The USGS "Meeker Peak" map appears to show the main cave entrance, at an elevation of 8000 feet just north of Meeker Peak. The closest you can get in a vehicle is probably at an elevation of about 6000 feet. The Rachel Boy Scouts made the whole trip in a day, but the long hike each way did not leave much time to explore the cave. This expedition would probably work better as an overnighter. [Not visited.]

Tybo and Keystone Ghost Towns

Accessible from Basecamp on US-6 about 10 miles N of Warm Springs. Maps: "Tybo" and "Flagstaff Mountain." [Not visited.]

Nuclear Test Site at Morey Flats

One of history's largest underground nuclear tests, "Project Faultless," was conducted on Jan. 19, 1968, not on the Nevada Test Site but on public land north of Warm Springs. (About 90 road miles from Rachel.) You can actually visit Ground Zero, where there is a plaque on a big concrete plug and extensive evidence of ground collapse. (Since the explosion was very deep underground, there is probably little chance of radiation.) The site is accessible by good dirt roads from US-6. From Warm Springs, go north on US-6 about 25 miles to milepost 76.5, where there is a road on the left and a sign pointing to "Moore's Station." This is a well maintained dirt road suitable for any vehicle. Follow it 12.5 miles until you reach a stop sign. Keep going straight ahead (on an unmaintained road) about 1.4 miles until this road ends at a perpendicular road. You are now very close to the site: Look for a concrete cylinder sticking out of the ground, looking like a small water tank. Go right a few hundred yards and then left at the first opportunity to drive right up to the plug. Map: "Mount Jefferson" 1:100,000.

For an information sheet on the Project Faultless site, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to: Vernon Brechin, 255 S. Rengstorff Ave. #49, Mountain View, CA 94040. Vernon is one of several people who have conducted detailed private surveys of the site.

A visit to the Project Faultless Test Site can be conveniently combined in a day trip with Moore's Station, Lunar Crater and possibly Tybo and Keystone.

Moore's Station

Moore's Station is an abandoned ranch compound in excellent condition. Once you see the old stone ranch house nestled in the trees, you'll want it for your own. To get there, follow the instructions for the Morey Flats test site above, but when you get to the stop sign, turn right instead of going straight. Moore's station is about 5 miles beyond this point. (If you encounter a fork, keep on the more traveled road.) This is a fine location for a picnic. Some locals also like to bring their sleeping bags and camp on the house's second floor, which gives you a roof over your head and a solid floor underneath. (This also keeps you out of the way of the rattlesnakes, which seem to be common here.) Keep in mind, however, that this property is still privately owned, so you should watch your manners. The house was abandoned long before Project Faultless. The steel rods you see bracing the structure were installed by the government just before the test. A little beyond the house, there is supposed to be a lake [not visited], popular for fishing but not suitable for swimming.

Lunar Crater

This is a volcanic caldera associated with recent eruptions (less than 10,000 years ago). It is a deep hole in the ground, like an inside-out mountain. Accessible by a well-marked dirt road from US-6 at milepost 79.0 about 28 miles NE of Warm Springs. This road runs about 7 miles S from US-6 to the crater. The road is rough and a half-mile stretch of it is treacherously sandy, but a car can make it with a confident driver. Remember to keep moving at a healthy speed across the sand or you will get stuck. You can hike down into the crater, about 30 minutes each way. Two other nearby geological attractions are Easy Chair Crater [not visited] and The Wall, both well marked. Unless you have an interest in geology, The Wall seems uninteresting and is not worth the additional 8 mile dirt road drive. Also, at milepost 82.0 on US-6, there is a sign pointing to "Black Rock Lava Flow, 2 miles" [not visited]. Map: "Lunar Crater."

Tonopah Test Range

A semi-secret base about 30 miles southeast of the town of Tonopah and about 100 miles west of Rachel. Traditional testing base for advanced aircraft after they graduate from initial development at Groom. Viewpoints on public land are accessible by a paved road at Mile NY 13.5 on US-6. This Mecca for secret aircraft watchers deserves its own viewer's guide. Basic advice: If you stay outside the straight east-west fence line, then you are on legal ground. (Warning: Security forces here have been known to lie about this.)

East of Rachel

Old Tempiute Ghost Towns

Stone foundations dating from the 1800s. Easily accessible to most vehicles from SR-375. See description at LN 13.6.

Logan and Crescent Ghost Towns

Accessible from the road north at LN 27.5 on SR-375 not far from the Black Mailbox. High clearance (or mountain bikes) required for the last few miles. [Not visited.]

Tikaboo and Badger Mountains

On the other side of the Tikaboo Valley from White Sides and Freedom Ridge is a block of mountains that are untouched by the Air Force's proposed land withdrawal. At least one of these, Tikaboo Peak, has been confirmed as offering a direct view of the Groom Lake base. The hike is strenuous and a 4WD may be required to reach the closest access point. [See TIKABOO PEAK GUIDE.]

Swimming at Ash Springs

As you drive through the tiny settlement of Ash Springs on US-93, you will pass the old warm spring resort, bristling with Keep Out signs. It is a Tom Sawyer sort of swimming hole with rope swings and water slides, now sadly derelict. The commercial attraction is fenced in and strictly off-limits. However, a small section of the warm spring, outside the fence, is on BLM land and is still open to the public, for free. The entrance is a dirt road directly across the highway from the busy "R" Place gas station/convenience store. The

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road is on the north side of the commercial attraction, beside the remnants of a billboard saying "JUST 300 YDS." (The small "No Trespassing" sign at the corner of the fence is deceptive: It refers to the fenced-in area, not the road beside the fence, which is public.) A few hundred feet in on this road, there are a couple of small warm-water pools and a picnic table. There isn't enough space to actually "swim," but you can get fully wet and the water is a comfortable bath temperature year-round. The spot can be crowded in the summer—Three's a crowd here.—but it is usually deserted the rest of the year.

Like many other warm springs near human thoroughfares, this one is populated with what appear to be small aquarium fish. These little mongrels love to feed on human flesh. Actually, it is the microorganisms on the skin that they savor; they never actually bite. It is a curious sensation to have a hundred little mouths sucking on you, and the adventure is highly recommended. (For the squeamish, there is also a fish-free pool.)

Pahranagat Wildlife Refuge

A pleasant lakeside picnic and camping spot is Upper Pahranagat Lake on US-93, south of Alamo. This is the only lake for miles that has water year round. Accessible to all vehicles. There are about a dozen tree-shaded campsites along the shore, available for free. (No running water or facilities.) Just drive in and claim a site. Swimming is not permitted.

Delamar Ghost Town

Delamar was once a mining boom town of 3000 people. The town was known as the "Widow-maker," because the mines in the area produced a fine dust that resulted in the deaths of many miners from lung disease. Accessible from US-93 about halfway between SR-375 and Caliente. Well marked entrance, then a 13 mile drive on dirt roads from there. Road is maintained for about 11 miles, then becomes rough and rocky, but passable by sturdy cars. At a fork 5.8 miles from the highway, be sure to bear left, as the road here is not well marked; otherwise, go straight whenever you encounter an intersection. Many stone foundations and mine workings, with only a few buildings still standing. Look for a big twenty foot high wall standing alone; this is the top of Main Street. Very interesting terrain around the town, ideal for mountain bikes.

Caliente

[Pronounced "Cali-enny" locally.] On US-93 about 42 miles from eastern end of SR-375. Caliente is proud of its classic railroad station, which has been preserved as city offices. Here you will find town offices, visitors center, public library, police and the "Nuclear Waste Office" (something every small town should have). All services can be found in town, include motels, a grocery store, a large hardware store, gas and restaurants. There isn't much to do in Caliente itself aside from visiting the train station, but the tourist office can give you information on nearby attractions, like those listed below. Also in Caliente is the local BLM office, which offers brochures and sells a limited selection of maps. (On US-93 at the south end of town. Phone 726-8100. Hours: 7:30-4:15 M-F.)

Amtrak trains stop in Caliente enroute to Las Vegas (Sun./Wed./Fri, 12:45am) and Salt Lake City (Mon./Wed./Fri., 6pm). However, this isn't useful to most travellers, since there are no rental cars or significant public transportation once you get here; best to go to Vegas. There are buses serving Caliente a couple times a week from Las Vegas and Ely. (Lincoln County Transportation, 702-728-4477, and Trans Nevada Stages, 702-289-3079) These buses also stop at Ash Springs, near 375, but you won't find any transportation from there.

Rainbow Canyon

Rainbow Canyon offers a paved scenic highway running through lush and interesting terrain south of Caliente. A self-guided tour describes the sights and directs visitors to Indian petroglyphs and a number of easy walks: Pick up the brochure at the Caliente BLM office or at the Caliente Visitors Center in the train station. The paved road is about 25 miles long but the excursion down and back could take half a day if you see all the sights. Plenty of places to picnic along the way. Once you reach the end of the paved road at Elgin, you can go back the way you came (the easiest option) or continue on one of two dirt roads south. Staying on the main road takes you southwest through Kane Springs Valley to rejoin US-93 south of Alamo; this is said to be a very good maintained dirt road, probably suitable for any vehicle. Another dirt road runs south beside the railroad tracks to join I-15 at Glendale/Moapa. This is said to be a rugged road suitable for 4WD only.

Cathedral Gorge State Park

On US-93 N of Caliente. Impressively sculptured clay formations with many narrow passageways to explore. Highly recommended and worth a couple of hours. Great for kids and adventurous adults. Easy access for any vehicle.

Pioche

Just off US-93 N of Caliente. County seat of Lincoln County and an interesting old mining town. Many abandoned mine buildings still standing in the surrounding area. Historical buildings in the downtown area including a free museum and the "Million Dollar Courthouse." [Pronounced "Pee-ohch."]

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Summary of Lazar's Claims

What follows is based on the word of Lazar....

During late 1988 and early 1989, Robert Lazar worked briefly for a secret government project analyzing the propulsion systems of alien flying saucers. He says he did not know what he would be working on when he was hired, only that he would be doing something with "advanced propulsion systems." When he reported for work, he was taken by plane and bus to a highly secure facility known as "S-4," a few miles south of Groom Lake. There he learned the true nature of his work: to "reverse-engineer" alien craft. He saw nine flying saucers in hangers near Papoose Lake and viewed one of them briefly in flight. He read briefing documents on alien technology and human-alien contact, and examined one saucer in detail. Lazar has a good general understanding of how the propulsion system works and says that it is dependent on the special properties of Element 115, a superheavy element not found naturally on earth.

Lazar claims to be a physicist with degrees in physics and electronics, but his credentials have been difficult to verify. His public records have been disappearing, he contends, apparently by government design. Credentials aside, it can be independently confirmed that he has worked in some capacity for Los Alamos National Laboratories and that he has designed and built high speed rocket cars as a hobby and business.

Lazar apparently obtained the secret job in Nevada through contact with Dr. Edward Teller, "father of the H-bomb," who Lazar met several years before in Los Alamos. All attempts to get Teller to either clarify or deny his contact with Lazar have failed. After Teller's recommendation, Lazar was hired almost immediately. Lazar's association with this project was short-lived, however, in part because he could not resist talking to his friends about it and bringing them to view the saucers from the Tikaboo Valley. Within a few months of beginning work at the "secret saucer base," his employment ended.

In May 1989, at the urging of television reporter George Knapp, Lazar was interviewed about his experiences on a local Las Vegas news broadcast. Although he was shown in silhouette and identified only as "Dennis," he was recognized immediately by his former employers, who made threats on his life. Shortly after the broadcast, Lazar was shot at while driving his car on the freeway. Instead of intimidating him into silence, however, the threats only forced him to make his story fully public to protect himself. He finally appeared as himself on a series of local television news broadcasts in November 1989. This lead to other reports in the national and international media, and it is this publicity that is largely responsible for the popularity of Highway 375 as a place to look for flying saucers.

Naturally, Mr. Lazar's claims are more than a little controversial, and extensive arguments have been put forward both for and against his case. For further reading, video and audio programs on his claims, see REFERENCES.

> *"...a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma"*
> *—Winston Churchill*[60]

[60] He was referring to Soviet Russia, but the analysis could equally be applied to Bob Lazar or UFOs in general.

Flying Object Identifier

Sightings

Following are the objects and optical effects I have personally witnessed around Area 51. None of them appear to be anything secret or alien. The list below is the result of many nights of watching October 1992 through April 1995, but I have not been on watch 24 hours a day. As a resident, I liked to sleep almost every night, and most of the time I have been soundly unconscious in my bed when other people have reported interesting phenomena. Given this imperfect exposure, I cannot call this list definitive, but I can at least testify that there is a lot of conventional activity out there that could be mistaken for alien manifestations. Perhaps this list will help others avoid making similar errors.

To list everything unusual that anyone ever reported in this area of Nevada would be a daunting task that would require a book of its own. With so many unverifiable stories floating around, I have chosen to catalog here only objects that I have actually seen myself. This list is in alphabetical order. The names are my own; other people may have different ones.

"Aurora Roar"

Not a sight but a sound: a deep, throbbing roar associated with the rumored Aurora spy plane. Supposedly, this sort of sound would be generated by a pulse engine while the craft is idling or traveling at relatively slow speed.

Heard: During daylight hours in Rachel, once or twice on the same day, probably Dec. 9, 1992 (or the day before or after). In each case, the weather was heavily overcast, and I could not see anything.

Remarks: Although this sound was very loud and very distinctive, I cannot claim that it provides proof of an exotic aircraft. The sound could conceivably have been produced on the ground by some unrelated device—perhaps a rocket engine. Only time I heard this sound was when two prominent aviation watchers were in town specifically looking for the Aurora, and they reported it as evidence of the existance of that plane. I cannot make this claim, because I was not tuned in to these claims at the time and did not not the characteristics of the sound.

"Blue Flame"

This is a long blue light the color of a propane gas flame. It is the afterburner of a jet operating "dark," without position lights or strobe. Since the aircraft itself could be invisible in the dark sky, a distant observer might see the flame itself and think it was a craft. Since the flame is long and thin, the observer might think it is a flying saucer on edge.

Sighted: Overhead in the Sand Spring Valley. Object was close enough to confirm that the darkened craft was a jet. It was also accompanied by another jet displaying conventional lighting.

Bumblebee Effect

This is not an object, but my term for physiological illusions of the eye that can make a steady object appear to jump around. A more precise technical term for at least one component is the *autokinetic illusion*. A visitor to the Black Mailbox recounted for me an example from his grammar school days. In science class, the teacher turned off all the lights and held up a small penlight. The students were supposed to call out which way the light was moving. The students called out "left" and "right" as the light drifted around in front of them. Then, the lights suddenly came on and the teacher was found to be on the other side of the room. The flashlight was sitting motionless on the teacher's desk the whole time.

If you've studied human vision, you know that the eyeball never stays still. Even when fixing an object in a "steady" gaze, the eye actually oscillates around in tiny jumping movements called *saccades*, compounded by other types of involuntary movement including *tremor* and *drift*. Since the eyeball is moving at all times, the brain's optical processing system has no direct way of judging the absolute motion of any object it sees. Instead, it has to deduce the information by reference, by comparing the object to its background or to other nearby objects in the field of view.

When the background is indistinct, as it often is at night, the optical system lacks the clues it needs to determine movement. As a result, the object may appear to dance around in small, jerky movements

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corresponding to those of the eye (or to the unsteady movements of hand-held binoculars). In the absence of nearby reference points, an otherwise steady object, like the planet Venus, may appear to flit around like a bumblebee, hence the "Bumblebee Effect." Combined with the actual movements of a car or plane, the Bumblebee Effect can make a mundane earthly object, like car headlights, seem truly alien.

The Bumblebee Effect would not account for an object racing across half the sky, but across small arc distances, say 2° or less with the naked eye, the Bumblebee Effect can shed serious doubt on reported movements. It is unfortunate that the Bumblebee Effect accounts for exactly the kind of erratic movements we would expect a flying saucer to display; therefore, this effect deserves serious study. We need to learn at what point we can claim that the abrupt movement is in the object itself and is not just the result of optical factors.

The Strobe Effect—Related to the Bumblebee Effect, but actually a different effect added to it, are the dramatic jumping movements often observed in distant aircraft strobes. If an aircraft is very far away, all you may be able to see of it is its white strobe light flashing once a second or more rapidly. The optical system "fills in" what it thinks is happening during the black portions, and these assumptions my be erroneous.

If you have played with a strobe light at a science museum, you know that it can make otherwise steady movements appear very strange. A spinning wheel or a stream of water can appear motionless under the strobe and a pendulum or bouncing ball can appear to be two places at once. For another illustration of the strobe effect, try waving your hand rapidly in front of a television screen; suddenly you have not five fingers, but perhaps fifteen. Similar odd effects can be observed in a distant aircraft strobe. Smooth movements appear to be jerky, as though the object was jumping instantly from one strobe point to the next. This is due to the fact that in the black space between strobes, the eye loses track of its target. Each strobe flash is brief—usually only milliseconds long—so a single flash reveals little to the eye about the object's movements. The eye has no cue about where to look ahead, so it typically glances in the wrong direction instead of tracking the object steadily. When the next flash comes, the object usually shows up in an unexpected place and therefore seems to have moved farther than it actually has.

For example, the "tick-tack-toe" movement of a flashing object reported by Boylan [See REFERENCES.] could be seen as these optical effects operating on a distant jet or helicopter strobe. Without further data on the visual magnitude of the movements, this and other jumping-object reports are not very useful. A more convincing type of report might say, "The object moved the width of two full moons instantaneously." From this description, you could be reasonably sure that optical effects were not the primary source of the movement, since this reported movement is much greater than the motions of the eye.

Ruling Out the Bumblebee and Strobe Effects. The human optical system has been well studied [See *Seeing and the Eye* in REFERENCES.], and there ought to be a set of scientific formulas for determining exactly how much arc movement you must see in an isolated light to be sure an abrupt motion is in the object itself and not in your eye. Unfortunately, I do not have the information, and these formulas would probably be complex, taking into account the lighting conditions and type of background. Therefore, we will have to make some rough assumptions. As a rule of thumb (which we might later modify), when viewing objects against an indistinct background, we can say that one full moon width is the minimum observed single-step movement required to rule out the bumblebee and strobe effects. We can call this the *full moon rule* for judging object movement. In other words, if an isolated or strobing object jumps the apparent width of one or more full moons in a single step, then you can be fairly confident that the motion is real. If it jumps less than one apparent moon width, then you cannot be sure that the movement is not an artifact of eye movement.

The full moon rule applies both to naked eye observations and to sightings through hand-held binoculars. Although a moon-width appears larger through binoculars, there is also the shaking of the binoculars themselves to worry about, which may cancel out the advantage of using them to judge isolated object movement. (Binoculars can be useful, however, for making the background reference points more distinct and also for resolving the steady position lights on a strobing aircraft.)

The full moon rule is not completely satisfying because it does not take into account the circumstances when you *can* see a distinct background or nearby reference objects. In these cases a different rule of thumb might apply: You can be sure that movement of an object is real when you can describe verbally, in terms of distinct visual reference points, exactly *why* you know it is real. We can call this the *description rule* for judging object movement. A satisfactory description might be: "I know it moved abruptly because it was hovering for a couple of seconds above the mountain peak on the left, then it jumped almost instantaneously to hover above the mountain peak on the right." Other reference points might be stars or ground lights. It is even better if you can include in your description the names of the peaks, stars or ground lights, because then someone else can go out to the same location, look in the direction you did and understand exactly what you meant.

Car Headlights

These are intense white orbs hovering always *below* the horizon, often for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Do to optical effects, the motion of the vehicle and intervening obstacles, the orbs may flicker and "pulse" and appear to jump around within a limited area. In clear desert air and open terrain, car high beams can be seen dozens of miles away, and they resolve into two lights only when relatively close. In a wide desert valley, this bright light can seem to hover for a very long time as the car approaches. In the absence of clear reference marks, these orbs may also appear to dance, due to the Bumblebee Effect. [See.]

Recognizing car headlights requires only the most basic skills of skeptical reasoning, but many visitors have still been fooled, especially when the car appears on a distant dirt road where they do not expect it. A nationally broadcast special, "Sightings: UFO Report," shows a video clip taken by the Sightings crew at the Black Mailbox. It is supposedly of a mysterious "unidentified" white light dancing above the desert floor. However, since it moves in a straight line always below the horizon, it appears to me to be a car on Groom Lake Road.

Conventional Aircraft

On weekdays, an endless parade of military jets can be seen in the skies around Highway 375. At night, most have one or more white strobe lights flashing about once a second and red, green and white position lights at the extremities. By FAA regulation, civil airplanes are supposed to have a red light on the left wing tip, a green light on the right wing tip and a steady white light on the tail. In addition, there is usually a white strobe on each wing tip and a red rotating anti-collision light on the rear underside. This lighting pattern can vary for military aircraft, however, and secret stealth-type aircraft have often been reported as having only red lights—sometimes only a single red strobe or steady red light at the nose. During exercises some conventional fighter jets may operate "dark," just as they must do in wartime. In that case, you may see only the engine flame. In clear desert skies, aircraft lights can be detected by the naked eye 50 miles away or more. The long distances make most aircraft seem to operate "silently," with engines heard only when they pass directly overhead.

There always appear to be more jets operating at night than during the day because distant aircraft are much harder to see during the day. Without a beacon to tell you where to look, most distant aircraft go unnoticed in the bright sky, and you are aware of their presence only when they pass close enough to be heard. Even then, you may look up and see nothing, because the tiny gray aircraft blends into the blue and is often running far ahead of its apparent sound.

At night, when an aircraft is very distant, all you may see of it is its flashing strobe which inevitably appears to jump around. Almost no one has trouble identifying a nearby aircraft strobe against a clear field of stars, but on more overcast nights when there are no reference points, the Bumblebee and strobe effects can turn distant jets into erratic alien-appearing craft.

Aerial Tankers. Certain large conventional planes may strike the observer as suspicious, because they are often seen flying back and forth or circling Rachel at low speed. Closer observation reveals that this is usually a "Momma" plane feeding its babies one by one. The Momma is usually well-lit, noisy and obvious, but you usually need binoculars to see the fighter jets being refueled.

Commercial Jetliners. Almost imperceptible white strobes seen to the north of the Black Mailbox are probably commercial jetliners flying an east-west route about 60 miles away. Pilots flying these routes can plainly see Groom Lake, and you can too if you fly the right route (perhaps Denver to San Francisco) and sit on the south side of the plane.

Dust Devil

A dust devil is odd weather phenomena common to the open desert. It is a "mini tornado"—a funnel of whirling air sucking up dust and debris. Encountering one of these by chance, one might suspect that there was an invisible flying saucer hovering overhead causing the turbulence. (Maybe there is!) Dust devils can sometimes suck newspapers, cardboard and other light debris high into the sky, creating a tumbling "UFO" if you are in the right mind to see one.

Sighted: Almost every day in the Tikaboo or Sand Spring Valleys. They are especially prevalent on windy days, but can happen on calm ones, too.

Floaters

"Floaters" refers to the small bits of debris that float around in the vitreous humor, or liquid substance, of the eye. Some of these objects are white blood cells and others are the dead receptor cells sloughed off daily

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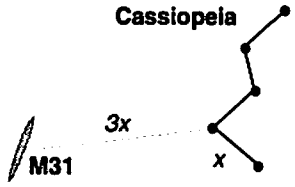
by the visual receptors. There may be other sources as well. Floaters may appear as indistinct spots or strings in your field of vision or sometimes as even bigger moving blobs that can be very distressing. For the most part, floaters are harmless. Everybody sees these things every day, although we are so used to the phenomena that we hardly notice it. The effect is most noticeable if you are staring up at a bright, blank sky. Floaters may appear to viewers who are scanning the sky for an undefined object or staring intensely at something distant at the limits of their visual acuity. If you think you see something drifting in the sky and cannot pin down exactly what it is, it is probably not an alien event, just the flotsam in your own eyes.

Galaxies



Distant galaxies are mostly too faint for the naked eye, but you can pick out a few of them with binoculars on a clear desert night. The most easily seen is the Andromeda Galaxy, or M31, found by scanning down from the "W" of Cassiopeia. This "W" is among the easiest constellations to spot when it is in the sky. It is on the opposite side of the North Star from the Big Dipper. To the right is a star map. M31 may be visible to the naked eye as a faint smudge, but through binoculars it becomes an impressive disk, like the perfect photos and drawings you see of galaxies in astronomy books. The whole disk of the galaxy supposedly occupies 5° of your unaided field of view.

Infrared Suppression Flares

Glowing orange balls, about the same color as Golden Orbs but not as bright, appearing singly or in a "necklace" of several separate balls strung across a portion of the sky. They hang in the air for 2 to 5 seconds, then fade out. Size and structure cannot be determined. Although these orbs are by far the brightest objects in the sky, their short life span, high altitude and relatively low light output seems to eliminate the theory that these are flares used to illuminate a ground target.

Explanation: This is what is called an "Infrared Suppression System" on a conventional jet. Flares are dropped from the plane[61] to produce a series of bright fireballs. The purpose is to distract heat-seeking missiles, which are supposed to lock onto a fireball instead of the plane's engines. These fireballs are bright enough to be seen during the day if you watch carefully: Look for a plane making dramatic maneuvers as if trying to escape a real or imaginary pursuer. During the day, you might also see white streaks of smoke in the sky after the flares have gone out, like scratches in the sky.

Comments: The release of the fireballs is usually accompanied by an evasive maneuver, so that the necklace of lights is typically curved. A distant observer who does not see the plane might get the impression that the lights define the edge of a saucer-shaped craft. As the lights go out, the observer might believe that the saucer shot off into the heavens. This illusion occurred to my eyes even when I could see the plane emitting the balls and "knew" there was nothing there. Often, the mind fills in the form of things it cannot see, and these interpretations are later remembered as solid fact.

"Janet" Crew Flights ("Old Faithful"?)

If you climb White Sides during business hours on a weekday and look down on the "top secret" Groom Lake air base, you will probably see a line of Boeing 737s parked on the tarmac, just to the right of the big "barn" hanger ("Hanger 18"). These are used to ferry workers back and forth to Groom Lake from McCarran Airport in Las Vegas (and possibly from other aircraft development sites like Edwards AFB.) At night and on the weekends in Las Vegas, you can also see these unmarked planes parked on the tarmac at McCarran, at a modern but unmarked terminal at 5400 Haven Street[62] behind the Tropicana Hotel. Until recently, these aircraft were operated by EG&G under contract with the government, but rumor now suggests that they are now being operated directly by the Air Force. That is how Lazar says he commuted to "S-4." He reported to McCarran Airport in the afternoon, took one of these shuttle flights to Groom, then took a bus south to Papoose Lake. On FAA flight control frequencies, the EG&G planes are identified by the company name "Janet."[63] Ferrying hundreds of employees daily both to Groom Lake and the Tonopah Test Range, "Janet" offers more flights in and out of McCarran than most of commercial airlines there.

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[61] As an alternative on some aircraft, puffs of fuel might be released by the plane and ignited by trailing wires.

[62] The terminal is listed under EG&G in the Las Vegas phone book and is easily observed from many locations around the airport. An excellent bird's eye view can be had from the 21st floor of "Island Tower" at the Tropicana Hotel, across the hall from the elevators. Our spies also report that there is a good view from the eastward facing rooms at the Luxor.

[63] Some watchers have suggested that JANET is an acronym for "Joint Army Navy Employee Transport," but this is unconfirmed. Following the example of most military flights, JANET may mean nothing at all, simply being a code word chosen at random.

The flights operate on a regular schedule, and only on weekdays. The first flight to Groom Lake leaves the EG&G terminal in Las Vegas at 4:30 am and rolls to a stop at Groom shortly after 5:00 am.[64] By coincidence, 4:45 to 5:00 is about the time that many veteran saucer watchers have reported seeing "Old Faithful," a reliable UFO that shows up on schedule nearly every morning. I have not yet talked to all the veteran watchers about what they have seen, but after watching one of the Janet jets land at Groom one morning, I began to develop a theory. To test this theory, I decided hunt for Old Faithful myself. On a number of nights since February 1993, I have parked along Highway 375 facing Groom Lake and set my alarm for 4:30 am. On every weekday I have been on watch, I have seen a light in the southwestern sky sometime between 4:45 and 5:00. Usually, it is exactly what my theory predicted: An intense white light hovering just above the horizon and appearing first in the direction of Papoose Lake. It seems to hang in the air for many minutes without moving, then it drifts south, diminishing slightly in intensity and eventually descending below the horizon in the direction of Groom Lake.

Tail Numbers and Registrations for "Janet" Jets (Partial, as of June 94)

Tail #	Reg. #	Owner	Address
Boeing 737-200s...			
N5175U	20689	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N4508W	19605	Great Western Capital Corp	Beverly Hills CA 90211
N4515W	19612	Great Western Capital Corp	Beverly Hills CA 90211
N5177C	20693	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N4529W	20785	First Security Bank of Utah	Salt Lake City UT 84111
N5176Y	20692	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N4510W	19607	Great Western Capital Corp	Beverly Hills CA 90211
Beechcraft Kingair...			
N20RA	UB-42	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N654BA	BL-54	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N661BA	BL-61	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015
N662BA	BL-62	Dept. of the Air Force	Clearfield UT 84015

A few other times, a fainter and less impressive light appeared first in a more southerly direction, in the vicinity of the Las Vegas "glow." This light moved smoothly along the horizon to also descend in the vicinity of Groom Lake. Only one of these lights would appear each morning, never both, and the logical conclusion is that they are both the early morning Janet flight, taking either of two routes from Las Vegas. The lights I saw made no dramatic moves, although as each traversed the horizon it did disappear behind high points on the ridge from time to time. Through binoculars, I could usually see a faint strobe on the edge of the white light, although the strobe was not apparent to the naked eye.

Many veteran visitors seem to have staked their reputations on Old Faithful, announcing it as proof positive of everything they always claimed about UFOs and a far-reaching government conspiracy. It would be disrespectful of me to inquire too deeply, and, alas, there are already a few veteran watchers who I am no longer on speaking terms with, so I can no long interview them. I will leave it to the reader to decide. Perhaps the veterans have indeed seen a reliable flying saucer at 4:45: If a human-operated UFO had been out caterwauling all night, this might be just the time it would race back to base so as not to be seen by the people on the early morning shuttle. Or, maybe this 4:30 Janet flight is just a clever disinformation ploy by the government, staged solely for my benefit to discredit all those previous Old Faithful sightings.

The only thing I am certain of is that the object *I saw* at 4:45 was a 737 on approach. I know this because I have been up on White Sides when 737s with bright landing lights have touched down on the runway. These flights only occasionally fly in a direct bee line from Las Vegas to Groom. More often, they fly northwest first,[65] perhaps to avoid an active bombing area. At Mercury, they turn NNE toward Groom. This flight path means that the plane is facing the saucer watchers for about half of the trip. The short duration of the flight means that the plane does not reach a very high altitude, and this means, by FAA regulation, that the bright landing lights must be on for most of the journey. These lights can be seen from much farther away than the plane's strobes and position lights. Thus, we have the apparent effect of a bright white light hovering for a long time just above the horizon, apparently directly above Papoose Lake. In haze or overcast, this light might change into a vague glow, and it could also take on some haze-induced color as well, usually toward the red end of the spectrum.

The notion that some kind of deliberate disinformation is involved in the appearance of the light is hard for me to swallow, because at any other industrial facility, 5:00 am is a reasonable time for the first shift of workers to arrive. If anyone has indeed seen a flying saucer at 4:45, then they ought to have seen this very bright and prominent light as well.

Lightning

In Dec. 1992, I saw some unusual lightning over Railroad Valley and the northwestern part of Nellis range. It struck *upward* from the clouds into an apparently empty sky. The lightning occurred in groups of several bolts that struck upward, then fanned out like a flower, reminiscent of a fireworks display. It was a

[64] At least until recently. The schedule may have changed.

[65] This is confirmed by flight control broadcasts. ("Janet 301, proceed direct to Mercury.") Further confirmation might be obtained by parking on US-95 near Mercury and watching for the aircraft to pass overhead and make its turn.

[66] If there are any scheduled flights to these other locations, they are few compared to the McCarran flights.

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very cold night with snow on the ground and surface temperatures probably in the 10s or 20s. The lightning produced no sound, and there was no local precipitation. The strikes occurred at a rate that was consistent with normal lightning—one episode every couple of minutes.

When seen from a greater distance, clouds obscured the lightning bolts, and all that could be seen were bright orange flashes illuminating part of the sky. Occurring unexpectedly in calm weather like this, the display could be interpreted by some watchers as an alien manifestation, but I have no reason to suppose this lightning isn't natural. I have seen more bizarre displays during the course of desert thunderstorms. Still, it would be interesting to know what causes this type of cold weather lightning.

Magnesium Parachute Flares

I have seen these on many occasions: Extremely bright orange balls of light seen appearing suddenly above a fixed location within the Restricted Zone, hovering for several minutes and drifting slowly down. They sometimes drifted slightly sideways but otherwise made no abrupt moves until they faded out. Size and structure could not be determined by the naked eye or through 10 x 50 binoculars. The intensity fluctuated, but the color remained constant —similar to that of sodium vapor lighting or truck fog lamps. When visible, these objects were by far the brightest things in the sky, many times brighter than street lights, distant car headlights or the brightest planet.

The orbs were surrounded by the faint strobes of other craft apparently hovering around them (usually visible only through binoculars), perhaps helicopters or circling planes. The orbs themselves were easily visible without binoculars and were perhaps hundreds of times brighter than the strobes. I compare the scene with looking at Jupiter and its surrounding moons through a telescope: The orbs were many times brighter than Jupiter, but the relative difference in brightness between the orbs and the surrounding strobes seemed about the same. Since an aircraft strobe itself is very bright light, this would mean—if the aircraft and orbs were at the same distance—that the orbs were *extremely* bright at their source, almost like miniature suns.

The orbs always remained at relatively low altitude and never moved very far from their origin before dropping below the horizon. On each appearance, they were visible for between 15 seconds and several minutes. In other words, they were hanging in the air for extended periods, not simply arcing up and down in the air. A white glow of "light pollution" was visible on the horizon just before the orbs rose above it, and a bright flash of white light, like distant lightning, was also occasionally seen when the orbs were below the horizon. Perhaps this flash was associated with their liftoff from the ground, but I am not sure of this association. The orbs were usually seen in pairs rising up side by side but were also seen singly (perhaps with the second orb just below the horizon) and in groups of four. In the group of four, the sky was sufficiently illuminated for me to note a black plume of smoke or vapor rising from each orb.

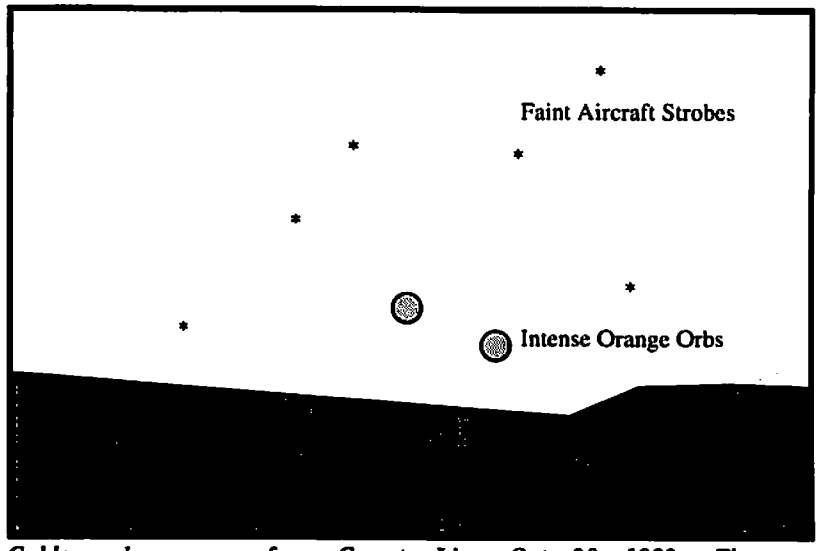
Example Sightings: On Oct. 20, 1992 from County Line, I saw two orbs moving together, rising above the horizon many times between 9pm and midnight, southward at about 175° from north, roughly in the direction of Groom Lake (or beyond). Four orbs moving together were seen the following night (Oct. 21) from LN 32.3 at about 10pm, at a direction roughly south or SSE, somewhere between 165° and 180°. If the source location was the same on both nights, triangulation suggests a location near Desert Valley in the Nellis Bombing Range, not over Groom or Papoose Lakes. As far as I could tell, I was the only person parked along SR-375 on these two nights, so it seems unlikely that this show was put on for the benefit of watchers.

On May 5, 1993, from the Black Mailbox, I saw a single occurrence of a single orb, slightly to the left of Mailbox Road (approximately due south, 180°), lasting at least 30 seconds.

Exotic Interpretation: A bright object with helicopters hovering around it seems to fit the description of the UFO in the Cash-Landrum incident (in which motorist in Texas were allegedly burned by a hovering object surrounded by military helicopters). One could speculate that the orbs are primitive "man-made" UFOs—perhaps a crude attempt to reproduce anti-gravity systems with earth materials.

Conventional explanation: Unfortunately, these "Golden Orbs" also fit the description of ground-launched magnesium flares—small burning objects like fireworks specifically designed to hover over a target and emit an extremely bright light. The flare hypothesis is consistent with the object's extreme brightness, orange color and lack of dramatic movement. This type of flare might be associated with a strafing run or a military ground exercise taking place below. The strobes surrounding the flares might be helicopters supporting the ground exercise.

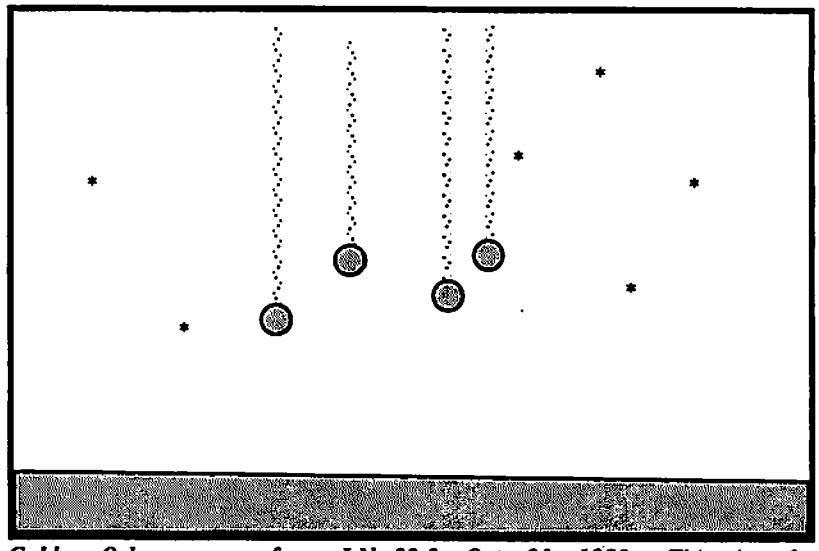
A Vietnam veteran I described my sighting to said that the orbs were probably the sort of magnesium flares that his unit used during the war. Each flare was attached to a parachute and was shot out ahead of the advancing troops to provide lighting for the assault. He said that the orange color and extreme brightness of the orbs was consistent with magnesium flares.



Golden orbs as seen from County Line, Oct. 20, 1992. They were the color of orange fog lights and were by far the brightest objects in the sky. They were surrounded by five or six faint aircraft strobes, apparently helicopters observing the exercise. The orbs appeared as blobs of light; no size or structure could be determined. (Their size in the drawing reflects their relative intensity compared to the aircraft strobes.)

Sightings by Others: Many others have seen these orbs as well. One Alamo resident who frequently drives to Rachel reported them to me (in Feb. 1993) almost exactly as I described them above. She says she has seen them on several occasions—both a couple of years ago and quite recently—while driving through the Tikaboo Valley. She saw only one orb at a time, however, not the pairs I saw in Oct. 1992. Her object appeared in the south probably in the same location I saw mine, and hers also did nothing dramatic—just hovered and moving slightly sideways. She also confirms tiny strobe lights surrounding this orb (visible to her without binoculars) and a white glow around the horizon before it arose.

Gene Huff says that he and Bob Lazar saw these orbs on one of their visits to the area in March 1990 after the Lazar story broke and that they recognized them as flares at the time. These were different, he says, from the light they saw in March 1989, which they believe was a flying saucer.



Golden Orbs as seen from LN 32.3, Oct. 21, 1992. This time four blobs of light appeared and gave off so much light that the landscape around them was illuminated like day. Also visible was a black plume of vapor rising from each orb.

A snapshot hanging on the wall of the Little A'Le'Inn is exactly what I saw. The inscription reads: "May 1992. Photo by Kathleen Ford. Location unknown." Technically, this is an excellent photo showing both the orbs and the surrounding landscape. Although the location is marked "unknown" there are plenty of clues in the photo to tell you where it is, including a fence and a Restricted Area sign. I suspect it was shot looking south from the Tikaboo Valley, probably at the south end of the road leading south from Groom Lake Road Mile 5.1, at the point where this side road intersects with the Restricted Zone. The orbs in the picture appear to be in the same general location I

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saw them, which would place them in Nellis bombing ranges.[67]

Meteors

In the clear desert skies, meteor activity is much more obvious here than it is elsewhere. Whenever I am deliberately watching the sky, hardly a night goes by when I don't see at least one shooting star. I and several other people saw a dramatic one from White Sides on the night of March 3, 1993. It was one of those rare occasions when someone says, "Look, there's a meteor!" and the rest of us looked up and actually saw it. It came down in the west and appeared to vanish directly above Groom Lake. Since it never fell below the horizon, there was no way to judge its distance, and I suspect that it was much further away than Groom Lake. I have no reason to suppose that this and other "shooting stars" I have seen here are anything unnatural.

Meteors can burn in a variety of different colors depending on their composition. The fact that the fireball is green or purple does not make it unnatural.

Optical Chromatics

Often reported by saucer watchers is a bright light in the sky hovering in a fixed position like a star or planet but flashing in different colors. Some observers describe the light as reminiscent of a multicolored police car light, flashing from red to green to blue in a pattern that is not quite discernible. Some say they see one color on the top of the "glowing orb" and another on the bottom, with strange pulsations in between. One aviation watcher who is a UFO skeptic reported to me his own experience with such a light. When he saw the colorful flashing orb through his new binoculars, he was so impressed by it that he got in his car and tried to chase it for several miles. When he could not catch up to it, he stopped the car and finally realized what it was. To make the object go away, he simply switched binoculars. Through a more expensive pair, all he saw was a steady yellow-white light. It was the planet Venus.

From grammar school, you will recall that white light is actually a mixture of many different colors, and these colors can be separated from each other using a prism. If you look through a prism at an ordinary light bulb, you seen the bulb as red, blue or some color in between depending on the angle of refraction. A similar effect can occur when looking at a star or planet through any kind of optical medium—like binocular lenses, the lens of your eye or the air in the atmosphere. The movements or fluctutions in any of these media can make a pin point of light seem to flash different colors. The effect goes away when you use higher magnification or better optics.

Other Watchers

As you sit near the Black Mailbox at night staring intensely in the direction of Groom Lake, you should beware of unintentional disinformation that could be perpetrated by your own fellow watchers. Some visitors may build a campfire on Campfire Hill. While in the mountain at night, I myself have found it tempting the shine my flashlight in the direction of the mailbox just to give people a show. Such displays are usually not premeditated or very sophisticated, and they should be easy for any skeptical observer to dismiss.

However, while hiking on White Sides during the day, I discovered what may be evidence of something more diabolical. It was a clear plastic cap, about an inch in diameter and two inches long. It looked to me like the cap found on an emergency road flare. This suggests be that someone lit this flare on the top of White Sides, in a direct line between the Black Mailbox and Groom Lake. This very bright orange light might be seen to be "hovering" along the edge of the horizon, although never above it, in the general direction where flying saucers are expected. I can envision a number of false sightings being derived from this. "It hovered and pulsed," people at the Black Mailbox would say; "It must have been 500 feet across." Others might claim, "It danced back and forth before my eyes," without being able to specify the magnitude of these movements. Still others might declare that Christ had finally returned and they saw him there on the mountain.

Photographic Artifacts

You take a photo of Bob Lazar at a UFO conference (a very rare occurance) and send the pictures off for developing. When they come back, there appears to be a small black flying saucer hovering in the sky above Bob's left shoulder—something you didn't notice when you were looking through the viewfinder. Is the saucer real? Could be. However, there are also a lot of things that can go wrong with the photographic process that could create a saucer-like spot on the picture. There could have been a speck of dust on the lens or in front of the film, or perhaps there was a defect in the film emulsion or on the final print. If the saucer shape is bright, maybe it is a lens flare, a light leak in the camera or a reflection from outside the camera. Photography

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[67] Range 61, 62, 64 or 65.

[68] Compared to some watchers, especially those of a conspiratorial bent, I have far greater trust for the military.

is a wishy-washy science. No rendition is ever perfect, as you can easily see if you blow up any photo to huge proportions.

Nonetheless, we should not entirely discount the possibility that the camera might see something that the eye does not. For one thing, the camera has a wider field of view, at least for detailed objects, than the eye does at any one instant. When you took your photo of Bob, most of your eye's photoreceptors were focused on him, not on the background. The camera can also capture events that happen extremely fast. If an object appeared for only a fraction of a second and then disappeared, your visual system might not register it, but the camera would if the shutter happened to be open at that instant. Finally, film is often sensitive to a slightly different spectrum of light than the eye, perhaps emphasizing an object that would not otherwise be noticed.

So is it real or is it an artifact? Unfortunately, eliminating all the possible photographic effects proves only that the object is "unexplained." It usually doesn't lead any closer to the truth.

Planets

I call Venus the "laughing planet," because whenever I glance away from it, it dances around, sticks out its tongue at me and goes, "Na, na." When I look back at it again, it becomes perfectly still. Venus is especially deceptive on slightly overcast nights when it is the only celestial object visible. With no other stars to use for reference, Venus can appear to weave back and forth and up and down, just like a flying saucer should. If Venus is close to the horizon, you can see it move up or down as the earth turns, compounding the illusion of more erratic movements. The jumping illusion goes away when you sight along some steady ground object like a telephone pole.

Planets, primarily Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, are often many times brighter than stars and usually have more color to them. Atmospheric effects can sometimes make a planet seem to pulse or flash different colors. These apparent fluctuations of intensity and color usually go away when you look at the planet through binoculars or a telescope. Through binoculars, you can often see the moons of Jupiter and the rings and moons of Saturn.

"Red Dots"

Many tiny red lights dancing just above the horizon, appearing to hover and moving in unusual ways. Color is constant, roughly that of the red lights seen on conventional craft, but no flashing strobes are visible. These Red Dots are often "escorted" by craft with conventional strobes.

Sighted: At LN 32.3 on several nights in Oct. 1992. I saw them in the northwest, apparently maneuvering over the north end of the Groom Range. They always appeared about an hour after sunset at about the first moment of total darkness, danced around for no more than an hour or two, then dispersed.

Explanation: In December 1992, I saw similar red lights at close range from NY 43.6 in Railroad Valley. These red lights were always attached to planes, often executing extreme evasive-type maneuvers and ejecting Infrared Suppression Flares. [See.] Some planes had a single red light at their nose, while others had only a single red strobe or operated dark. They were operating above the south end of Railroad Valley and adjoining areas in the western part of the Nellis Range. They appeared in a groups of from two to six, often coming from a direction that could have been consistent with takeoff from Groom Lake (although I could not confirm this).

The Red Dots I saw from the Black Mailbox are almost certainly these jets with unusual lighting. Seeing these objects in two dimensions and from a great distance (more than 40 miles from the Black Mailbox) might give the illusion of hovering, and the Bumblebee Effect might exaggerate already dramatic evasive maneuvers.

Comments: These "Red Dots" might have been the objects reported in the Business Week article about a visit to the Black Mailbox. [See REFERENCES.] Although these are not flying saucers, their unusual lighting pattern might indicate an F-117A or secret test aircraft of some kind.

Red Flag Air Exercises

The most visible purpose of the vast Restricted Area in southern Nevada is for the training of military pilots and crews in realistic war games. The best known of these exercises is Red Flag, held several times a year for four weeks at a time. When this or a similar exercise is taking place, the skies around Rachel are abuzz with dramatic activity, day and night. Visiting squadrons from across the country and around the world do battle with each other in teams. Military aircraft of all makes and models engage in mock dogfights and real bombing runs that can sometimes seem unworldly and inexplicable to an inexperienced viewer. Rachel during Red Flag is reminiscent of Baghdad during the Gulf War: There are many spectacular lights in the sky, almost all of which can be attributed to military activity.

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Rio Hotel Laser Show

On the evening of Jan. 14, 1994, two separate groups of aircraft watchers looking toward Groom Lake from the north and east, were startled to see beams of light split the sky and etch patterns on the cloud cover. It was about an hour after dark, and the two groups were unaware of each other. To the group on the north, the light appeared to be emanating from the Groom base itself. To the group on the east, the beam seemed to be coming from the south and etching parallel patterns on the cloud cover above the base—almost as though marking the outline of the long runway there.

After comparing notes the next day, the two groups thought they had found something interesting. Some speculated that they had witnesses "LADAR," or "light radar," which is rumored to be tested at Groom. Such a system could be used to detect stealth aircraft that might be invisible to ordinary radar.

Alas, when one of the group visited Las Vegas a couple of weeks later, an alternate explanation became apparent: the nightly laser display from the roof of the Rio hotel. It just so happens that this show, when seen nearby, displays the same patterns that this observer saw from north of Groom Lake. The beams of light that appeared to emanate from Groom Lake could also could have been coming from the Las Vegas glow directly behind. The northern group's distance from Las Vegas was about 110 miles, but a concentrated laser beam could certainly travel that far. I have seen the Rio lasers from the California border, about 40 miles distant. For the people east of Groom, the cloud cover might have been just the right altitude for the patterns in the clouds to appear over the base.

Incidentally, some observers with telescopes in the Tikaboo valley have reported seeing the powerful vertical beam from the Luxor hotel. Although more powerful than the Rio display, this beam is also less concentrated and more quickly merges with the Las Vegas glow.

Satellites

An earth-orbiting satellite is seen from the ground as a faint star, moving in a smooth arc across the sky. These are most commonly seen shortly after dusk or before dawn, because their light is a reflection of the sun. Satellites will often vanish suddenly as they pass into the shadow of the earth, or they may wink on as they pass out of it. Satellites make no trajectory changes apparent to the eye; they move smoothly and steadily across the heavens. There are now so many satellites now orbiting the earth that it is possible you will see more than one at once, perhaps crossing each other. Although they may move in different trajectories, each does not change its direction or speed. Satellites can usually be differentiated from high flying aircraft by the absence of a strobe.

Sleep Hallucinations

On at least one occasion, while parked at night along SR-375, I have seen big multicolored spacecraft move silently above my car. These were huge triangular or saucer shaped craft with many lights and complex surfaces, almost identical to those I have seen in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* or *Unsolved Mysteries*. Although the craft were very close me and my view of them was vivid, I felt somehow paralyzed at the time and had difficulty controlling my own movements and attention. The craft seemed to change in ways I cannot describe, and although I tried frantically, I had great difficulty analyzing what I saw.

Were the craft real? To my mind they were. It took some time and logical thought before I recognized that since I was lying face down on the back seat of the car, I could not possibly be seeing what I thought I was out the front window. The impressive craft were a dream, probably triggered by my desire to see UFOs.

Supposedly, dreaming takes place during REM sleep, the first episode of which begins about an hour after sleep begins. However, I also detect a period of vivid imagery at the border of sleep when I still seem to be half awake. There is not as much of a plot to these images as there is in regular dreaming, but they seem very real at the time and are usually well connected to what I know is possible. An example is when the alarm clock really rings in the morning and I really reach over to turn it off. Then I imagine that I am getting up and getting dressed, a vivid hallucination that I recognize is false only two hours later when I find, to my distress, that I never left my bed. Since the content of the dream is entirely plausible and has all the "feel" of reality, I can detect it as a dream only by logical analysis after I have actually wakened.

One wonders how many alleged alien abductions are actually these vivid dreams. Beds are prominent fixtures in many abduction tales. People often report being levitated out of their beds or seeing the aliens standing around their beds and looking down on them. Usually, the witness insists that the experience was much too real to be a dream, but that does not prove the case. Within the mind, dreams are every bit as real as what we experience during the day. It is only by later detective work—by thinking carefully about what could be possible and what is not—that we determine that the experience was an illusion. Most dreams are

sufficiently bizarre that they can quickly be discarded, but a few others are close enough to reality that analysis cannot yield an answer.

The proximity of sleep greatly confuses any real observation. An example: Once, when I was living in real rooming house in a real run-down warehouse district, I awoke to the smell of smoke. I got up, got dressed, and went outside to look for the fire. I wandered through surreal streets lined with deserted factories. I saw no one and found no fire, so I returned to my rooming house and my bed. When I awoke the next morning, I remembered the incident, but could not figure out whether it was a dream or had really taken place. I knew that the old warehouses and factories were real, but I could not figure out whether I had actually been outside walking among them. I looked at where my shoes were and how I left my clothes, but I still found no clue. To this day, I do not know whether I was really wandering the streets that night.

I'm sure I would be similarly confused if I experienced a nighttime abduction by aliens. The best I could do is examine the clues the next morning and respect whatever my best logic told me. Who knows, maybe I was abducted along SR-375, just like other ufologists claim to have been. Perhaps I have even been abducted every night of my life. It may be possible that the amazing craft I saw hovering above my car along 375 were real, but unless I can find some logical support for this observation, I have to discard it. In my case, later analysis said that I could not possibly have seen the craft from the angle I thought I did: I was lying face down on the back seat while looking out the front window at the same time, so the incident could not possibly have occurred. However, if a similar bedtime sighting happens again, I may not have enough clues to determine its reality. In this case, I would still have to discard the observation. Like my nighttime wanderings through the deserted city, it would be an intriguing memory to dwell on for a while but not something I could base any real decisions upon.

> *"I would have lived up there. I would have worked for no pay. It was just so fascinating to me."*
> *—Bob Lazar* [69]

[69] On the radio talk show Billy Goodman Happening, Nov. 21, 1989. Lazar is referring to his work at S-4.

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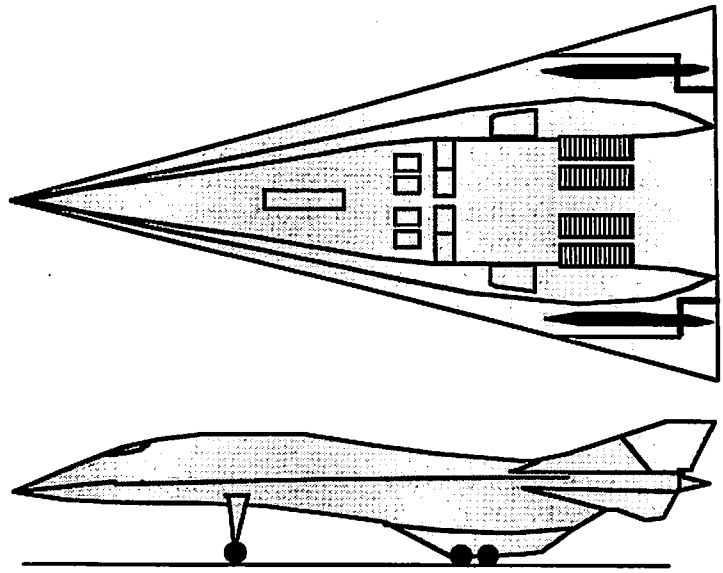
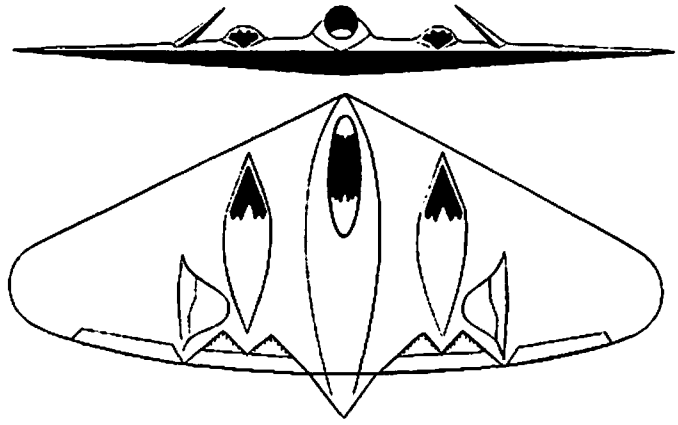
Rumored Craft

The following are rumored craft that I have not seen myself but which seem to be supported by reliable observer reports.

Aurora. This high speed reconnaissance aircraft is the subject of almost as much speculation as flying saucers. The picture at right is based on a drawing by Bill Sweetman in *Jane's Defense Weekly*, which in turn is based on an observer report in the North Sea. Rumored to have an unusual power plant, perhaps a "pulse" engine or "external combustion" engine, but probably nothing alien. What is certain about Aurora is its unusual sound and its curious pulsed contrails, described as looking like "cotton balls on a rope." This craft or its contrails has been seen in Texas and Scotland, and it has reportedly caused earthquake-like rumbles in Southern California. An aviation buff in Nevada also described this craft to me before I knew much about it: He described at triangular craft that shot away at tremendous speed from a group of jets that were escorting it. If Aurora exists, it was almost certainly developed at Groom Lake, but whether it is still based here is a matter of speculation. In the past few months, the loud and throbbing "Aurora Roar," associated with the craft's low speed travel, has been heard (or so claimed) only occasionally around Rachel.



Bat-wing Stealth. The safest bet for an unacknowledged aircraft operating around Groom would be a bat-wing Stealth, a cross between the F-117A and B-2. This has be variously described in the press as tactical reconnaissance plane or a follow-on to the F-117A. The F-117A, with its primitive faceted profile, may already be dated. Many different shapes have been proposed and supposedly sighted by watchers. Some claim to have seen a triangular with rounded wing-tips, like the one shown (known at the "TR-3A"). Others claim to have seen a bat-wing plane resembling a mini B-2. Almost certainly, there are more stories than there can be real aircraft.



Proof-of-Concept craft. Probably one-of-a-kind craft built to prove technical concepts for other Black Budget aircraft. Such craft may have a variety of triangular or diamond-shaped planforms, but they will fly just like ordinary planes.

Stealth Helicopter. Prototypes of various stealth helicopters have been confirmed to have been tested at Groom.[70] These might include helicopters that are extremely quiet.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Groom Lake has been used in the past to test ultralight aerial reconnaissance platforms. In theory, these stealthy flying wings might loiter over a target for days. Such a craft might be black and nearly silent and it would not make any dramatic moves. Such relatively low-price reconnaissance platforms might provide a logical alternative to the SR-71 or alleged Aurora.

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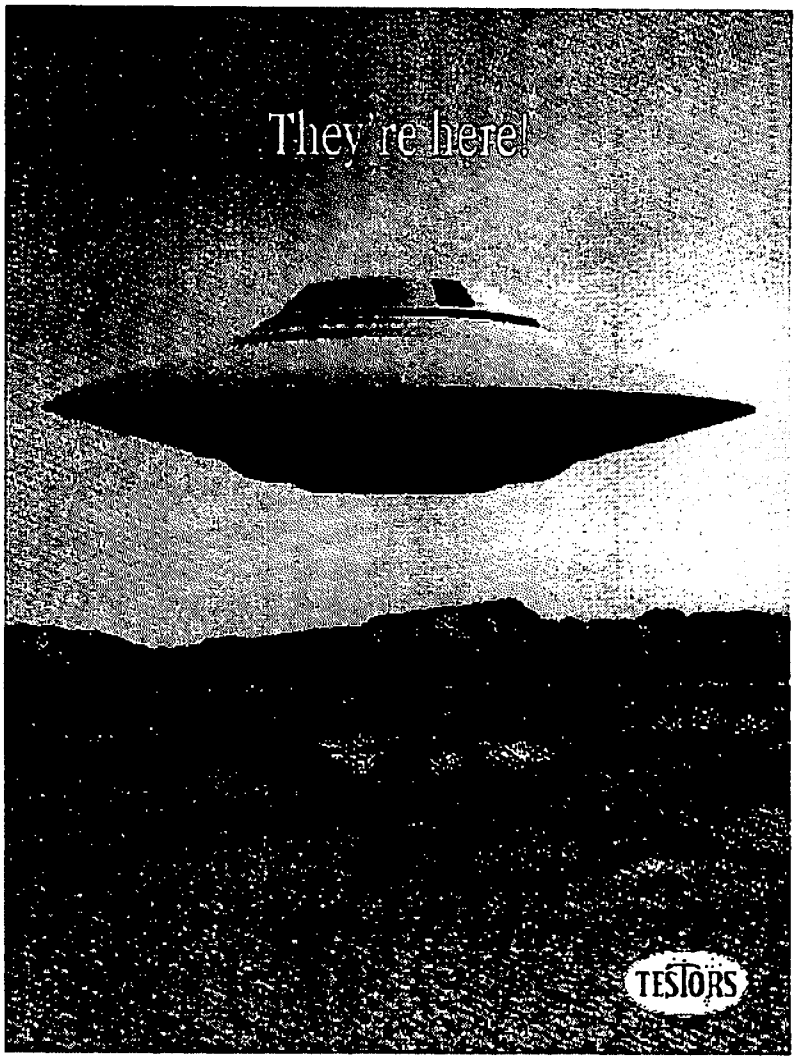
[70] Aviation Week, Feb. 6, 1994.

Lazar's Saucers. The flying saucers Bob Lazar describes are similar to the one at right. He claims that he saw nine saucers, each of different design, sitting in hangers at Papoose Lake and that the only time he saw any of them fly was when one made modest hovering movements outside. Later, from the Black Mailbox area, Lazar, Gene Huff, John Lear and others reported seeing a bright light that they assumed was a saucer. Their descriptions, and those of many other watchers who followed, describe a light of varying intensity that hovers or drifts gently in the air then suddenly jumps to a new location in a fraction of a second. Sometimes, the light is said to "sputter" ahead in short bursts, often combined with "stair-step" or "tick-tack-toe" movements that would seem impossible for any object of appreciable mass.

For a viewer to be sure of the sighting, the movements would have to be large enough to discount the Bumblebee Effect of the observer's own eye movements. A saucer shape alone is not necessarily proof of an alien craft, since conventional test aircraft could also appear to have this form. The only way to identify an "anti-gravity" craft from a distance is presumably by its dramatic inertial changes: from standing stop to high speed to standing stop again. (Since the craft is supposed to be altering gravity, the occupants would not feel any inertial changes.)

Such "jumping lights" would seem to exceed the boundaries of human technology. It should be pointed out, however, that even the appearance of something so bizarre does not necessarily prove the existence of alien craft. The lighted object itself is often reported as indistinct, as though surrounded by an "ionization haze" or an "anti-gravity warping field." This means that the linking of these nighttime lights with flying saucers depends to a large extent on Lazar's testimony. Without additional data, these lights would merely present an interesting mystery, something to be further explored but not yet proof of any one theory.



Promotional Flyer for Testor's Lazar Saucer model.

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References
(Through Sept. 1993)

Summary

Below are articles, books and television shows dealing with Area 51, publishes *prior to Oct. 1993*. That's when the Air Force formerly applied for the land around Freedom Ridge and White Sides and the press attention really began to take off.

You can lay out a lot of cash for books, magazines and videos on Area 51, Bob Lazar, UFOs and secret aircraft, but many repeat the same information. To avoid breaking the bank, I suggest visiting your public library first for the *Business Week* and *Popular Science* articles and any others you can find. Although I have provided price and ordering info for most of these publications, you should think twice before spending money. Items marked with an arrow (⇒) are highly recommended "primary" references; you should try to review these before looking for the others.

Print, Video and Audio are listed separately, and each is broken into logical sections: UFOs, Secret Aircraft, etc. Items are listed within each section in chronological order. The critical comments are my own and may differ from other people's opinions. While it would be nice not to have to judge anybody else's work, I feel that candid reviews are important to the average reader who does not have the time to pursue all of these references. Sometimes, due to inattention or lack of information, I may be way off base, so I reserve the right change my review in later editions.

This listing covers only references through September 1993, or just before the Air Force formally applied to take the White Sides and Freedom Ridge viewpoints. This action triggered a wave of news stories that are too numerous to list here. These references will be recorded in ***The Groom Lake Desert Rat***, a newsletter published by the author. Subscriptions by email via the internet are available free of charge; send your request to psychospy@aol.com. Subscriptions by regular mail are available for a fee: $15 for 10 issues for delivery anywhere in the world. Write to: Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001.

I am grateful to many people for leading me to references I would not have found otherwise. If you know of any Area 51 references not listed here (published through Sept. 1993), please let me know.

Print References

UFO Articles

Following are some of the articles and books that have discussed Lazar's story or Area 51. Some of the magazines mentioned below are "fringe" publications that won't be found at your public library. Most of these articles are available for inspection at the Area 51 Research Center.

"John Lear hangs neck out to say UFOs are real." Article in, *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (*Nevadan Today* supplement), 11/25/88, By Kerrie Robinson. Lear's UFO interests, pre-dating Lazar's "S-4" claims.

An article in *UFO Magazine* by Steve Herman, probably in early 1990. [Not reviewed, although Lazar responded to this article with a letter-to-the-editor objecting to it.]

UFO Magazine should also have an article by Don Ecker about Lazar in Vol. 5, No. 4, 1990, p. 15. [Unconfirmed, but listed as a reference in Jacques Vallee's book *Revelations*.]

"In the Land of Dreams." Article by Grant R. Cameron, T. Scott Crain and Chris Rutkowski in *International UFO Reporter*, Sept./Oct. 1990 (page 4, 5 pages). Highly skeptical review of the Lazar story. If you had read this first (as I did), you might not care to inquire further, thinking the case closed. (It took six months to rekindle my own interest in Lazar, based on some chance encounters with people who knew him and felt he was genuine.) Lays out most of the issues that need to be addressed before Lazar can be considered reliable. Highly recommended. This back issue is available for $4.00 plus $0.55 postage from: CUFOS, 2457 W. Patterson Ave., Chicago, IL 60659. (CUFOS is the second largest UFO organization. Also ask for info on other publications they sell.)

"Little Gray Men Made My Eyes Turn Red." Article by Eric Schine in *Business Week*, June 17, 1991 (page 20A, 4 pages). A skeptical reporter visits the Black Mailbox, is not convinced. Photo of Joe and Pat Travis in front of the Little A'Le'Inn. Hardly an in-depth inquiry, but useful as a general introduction to at least the social aspects of saucer watching.

"Look everyone, there it is!" says Pam.

"Oh, isn't it just beautiful?" chimes Joyce.

"What, what?" I ask. "Where?"

And there it is. A tiny dot of reddish light hovering above a mountain peak. First it grows steadily brighter, then darts back and forth, and finally fades in a grand swoop to the west. The whole affair lasts a good two minutes, and everyone seems immensely satisfied. There are pats on the back and hugs all around.

"Believers Are Not Alone." Article by Shannon Sands in *Los Angeles Times*, Mar. 20, 1991 (Section E, page 1). Subtitle: "Outer Space: A Nevada military base lures the faithful seeking close encounters of any kind with the UFOs they believe frequent the area." Good overview article on the social phenomena of saucer watching. Sheriff's deputies are interviewed and say they don't mind people coming as long as they obey the law. They say they haven't seen any UFOs themselves.

"Dark Chopper Tries to Crash S/4 'UFO Party.'" Article in *UFO Magazine*, Vol. 6 (1991), No. 4. A saucer watching expedition says that a black helicopter tried to run them off the road, and they have the video tape to prove it. They then encountered a deputy Sheriff who "demanded" their IDs. The helicopter encounter results in attempts by the saucer buffs to file Federal charges and otherwise make a public stink.

I do not doubt that the close helicopter fly-by occurred because I have had my own much-too-close, sand-in-your-face encounters with the big bird on public land. I recognize the importance of complaining about such abuses, because the obvious intent is intimidation and such actions are probably a breach of the law. Still, my objections are mostly a matter of principle and law. Personally, I live for the adrenaline rush of encounters like this and have never felt that my life was in danger. In spite of those evil-helicopter-vs.-innocent-civilian scenes you always see on television, the helicopter is usually at much greater peril in low level encounters than the car or pedestrian is. If you are in a car when the chopper approaches, you are protected by the steel around you. If you are on foot, you can slip behind a rock or Joshua tree and there is nothing much they can do but give you a sand blast.

Regarding the encounter with the Sheriff, this article reflects only the viewpoint of the conspiracy oriented ufologists who told the story to *UFO Magazine*. Sheriff's deputies have a different story to tell, that the ufologists tried to block the road and were otherwise making asses of themselves.[71] Regardless of who is right, it is disappointing that *UFO Magazine* did not call the Sheriff's department for their side of the story. Even if these officers are only stooges of the military as the conspiracy buffs claim, that does not excuse the poor journalism of not reporting their response. Even their "No comment" would be worthwhile. Without hearing both sides, the reader does not have the information necessary to make a judgment, and the article is just another piece of skewed propaganda.

"Secret Saucer Sites." Article by Richard Boylan in *Mufon UFO Journal*, August 1992 (Page 14, 2 pages). A clinical psychologist conducts an expedition to the Black Mailbox and other rumored "saucer bases." MUFON (The Mutual UFO Network, the nation's largest UFO group) sells available back issues for $3 each plus $1 postage (or $1.25 postage for two). Order from: Mufon, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Sequin, TX 78155. (Also ask for info on their many other publications.) Boylan's descriptions are interesting, although we need more information before making any judgments.

About 9:15 p.m. an intensely burning gold orb of light rose above the [Groom] range, hovered, and glided slowly sideways. The intensity of the radiating light was directly proportional to the power demand of the maneuver being executed. Thus, the orb grew extremely bright as it rose upward, and when it turned. After about four minutes the orb descended below the ridgeline.

About 9:40 p.m. a second orb of super intense white light with bluish tones arose, reached an estimated height of 1500 feet, hovered, then drifted slowly south, then reversed and drifted north and hovered again. After this the craft began blinking and then began a series of maneuvers difficult to describe and almost defying the laws of physics.

It jumped from one position to another, changing positions almost simultaneously over a distance of about 500 feet in two-thirds of a second, in a crazy quilt pattern of sideways, crisscrosses and ups and downs, in a random tic-tac-toe kind of sequencing. The craft kept up these split-second gyrations for several minutes in an incredible display of ability to defy inertial and gravitational forces....

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"Touring Nevada's 'Outer Limits'." Article by Richard Boylan in *UFO* magazine, Vol. 7, No. 6, 1992, page 32, 4 pages. A retold version of the Mufon Journal article, with a few more details. This back issue is available for $5.45 (postpaid) from UFO Magazine, Box 1053, Sunland, CA 91041-1053.

It's hard to say which of the above articles is more useful. Both are interesting, but both are marred by lack of reference. For example, in the Mufon article, Boylan says that the object rose to 1500 feet and moved instantly over a distance of 500 feet, but if he was viewing the action from afar in two dimensions, how could he estimate these distances? Since there is no mention of full-moon-width or binocular field of view, we cannot be sure that the movements he sees are not visually tiny ones that are only the result of the strobe or bumblebee effects. There is a lot of other information we would like to know about Boylan's sightings but that may have been left out of the articles due to lack of space. It is not clear how many nights he spent on watch here. Lots of people see UFOs in one night of watching, leave the area and never come back. They do not take the time to understand the conventional military activity in the area that could be mistaken for UFOs. I read Boylan's Mufon Journal article before I came here and found it very convincing, but now that I've lived in the area for a while, I see

[71] This latter is my interpretation. The deputies are taciturn gentlemen who would never say this themselves in public.

that conventional phenomena could also generate the same descriptions.

"Dreamland and the CIA." Article by Andrew D. Basiago in *Mufon UFO Journal*, July 1992 (page 10, 3 pages). Reviews the Lazar story and discusses its parallels to that of a former CIA operative Marion Leo Williams.

"The Outer Limits of Nevada." Article by David Strumsky in *Mammoth* (CA) *Times*, July 23, 1992 (page 4, 2 pages). An introduction to Black Mailbox and Little A'Le'Inn. Nothing new.

"Groom Lake Revisited: A Space-Age Odyssey." Article by Michael DiGregorio in *Far Out* magazine, Winter 1992, Page 59, 3 pages. An entertaining account of the journey of three civilians to the perimeter of the Groom Lake base. Contains some interesting but unconfirmed anecdotes about the base. No saucers seen. Back issues may be available from: L.F.P. Inc., 9171 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 300, Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Subscriptions (4 issues/year) are also available from that address for $9.95/year.

DiGregorio repackaged some of this material in articles for the Citizen Alert newsletter and *Velvet*.

"UFO Universe Goes Inside Area 51." Article in *UFO Universe*, Summer 1992, page 56, 8 pages. Lengthy chronicle of a saucer watch expedition, without much useful information. Lots of photos of the Little A'Le'Inn, apparently for lack of anything alien to photograph. Back issues might be available from Charlotte Magazine Corp., 1700 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

"High Strangeness in the High Country: Is the Air Force Flying a UFO Over Nevada?" Article by from Michael DiGregorio in *Far Out Magazine*, Fall 1992, Page 10, 8 pages. More intriguing but untraceable anecdotes. Like other of DiGregorio's articles, the chief aim seems to be entertainment; what are often lacking are the sources and background that would give the reader a basis for further investigation.

"It's Looking Up for Rachel, Nev.: Stop in for a cup and (flying) saucer." Article by Tom Simmon in the travel section of *The Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 31, 1993, page G-2, 2 pages. The author stumbled upon the Little A'Le'Inn by chance while doing a travel series. It's more about the Inn than about Area 51.

"SM Man Takes UFO Fans to Nevada Stakeout." Article by John Buzbee in the local Santa Monica (CA) newspaper, probably mid-Feb. 1993 (Page 1A, 2 pages). Follows conspiracy-oriented ufologist (and SM man) Gary Schultz on saucer expedition, Feb. 3-4, 1993.

A review, by Dennis Stacy, of an earlier edition of this *Area 51 Viewer's Guide* appears in the April 1993 issue of *MUFON UFO Journal*, page 16, 1 page. A separate review, also by Dennis Stacy, appears in *UFO Magazine*, Val. 8, No. 4, 1993, page 39, 2 pages.

"The Twilight Zone." Article by Carol Masciola in *Orange County Register*, Apr. 22, 1993 (Accent section, Page 1, 2 pages). This report, under the "Culture" by-line, follows the flamboyant Sean Morton (psychic/mystic healer/predictor of earthquakes) on one of his commercial tours to the area. No mention is made of the Bob Lazar—a glaring oversight—but the reporter does hunt down some skeptics, including Phil Klass, for alternative options.

> Barry Karr, executive director of Skeptical Inquirer magazine, said con artists are promoting Area 51 to make easy money giving tours and lectures. "There are about four or five guys running around the country and they all have a different shtick about Area 51," Karr said.
>
> Klass suggested that pranksters might be enhancing the military's aerial show with their own bogus UFOs and that local businesses might be perpetuating the myth to bring tourists to an otherwise uninviting corner of the desert. "If I were the owner of a bar or restaurant or filling station in that desolate area, I would love to have something to attract tourists. If that meant launching weather balloons outfitted with flares or buying radio-controlled airplanes and outfitting that with a special light, I would be very tempted to do something like that."

Karr's objection has some validity: There are certainly a number of unreliable characters on the Area 51 scene, but their cynicism and financial motivation are generally overestimated. I count only two Area 51 "experts" on the lecture and tour-giving circuit who I regard as a cynical hucksters.[72] Most of the charlatans here—dominated by the conspiracy theorists—seem to truly believe what they are saying and are not out for the bucks. Their UFO proselytizing is more a form of evangelical religion than conscious snake-oil selling. They feel that have a sacred mission to expose the "truth" about what the government and aliens are doing to us, with the exact nature of that truth varying dramatically from theorist to theorist. They seek not money, but public affirmation of their world view.[73]

Phil Klass' analysis, however, is way off the mark. If he had actually visited the merchants of this area, he would find that they are not the sort you could accuse of any kind of hoax. Effective hoaxing requires a certain level of technical sophistication, and not everyone in the world is as clever and cynical as Phil. In my experience, people here are exactly what they claim to be, even the government employees and police authorities. It is only the visiting ufologists who are often devious and not to be trusted, but none of the charlatans I know of seem smart enough to pull off any kind of credible hoax. There is a lot of rich material here for Mr. Klass, if he ever chooses to set foot in this desert wasteland, but most of it is the result of biased perception, not deliberate deception.

HUFON Report, the newsletter of the Houston MUFON chapter, reprinted a lengthy press release announcing the "Ultimate UFO Seminar," in its April? 1992 issue. Recommended mainly for comic relief. (I wrote my own letter-to-the-editor in response

[72] Hint: One is pugilistic. (MWC) The other is cheerful and flamboyant and milks just about every New Age fad. (SM)

[73] Although the jury is still out on Bob Lazar, he doesn't seem to fit into either the cynical huckster or proselytizing zealot category.

to this, which may have appeared in a later issue.)

"Unusually Fanatical Observers." Article by Roy Rivenburg in *Los Angeles Times*, May 5?, 1993 (Life Style section, page E1, 3 pages). Reports on the "Ultimate UFO Seminar" held at the Little A'Le'Inn, April 30-May 1. This conference was regarded as a fiasco by many who attended, given its dominance by one conspiracy-oriented theorist, Gary Schultz, and the absence of three of the more moderate scheduled speakers. The article, largely skeptical and dismissive, was as good as could be expected under the circumstances. It reports chiefly on the social phenomena of the conference as well as the newsworthy "re-appearance" of Bob Lazar. This article was widely syndicated.

"Home on the Range: Aliens Holed-Up at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site: Mass Hallucination, Extraterrestrial Collaboration or Clever Ruse." Article by Michael DiGregorio in *Far Out* Magazine, Summer 1993, Page 12, 4 pages. Recounts several anecdotes told by a former Air Force colonel regarding aliens at the Test Site. Unconfirmable rumor, but interesting nonetheless. Illustrates that personnel inside the Restricted Zone don't necessarily know any more than the rest of us about what is going on there. (Test Site workers are as subject to mythology and unsupported rumor as we are.)

"Groom Lake's Guerrilla Groupies." Interview in *Far Out*, Summer 1993, Page 55, 4 pages. Editor Michael DiGregorio interviews two anonymous civilians, "Bob and Ray," who spend their free time snooping around secret military bases. This article bears the distinction of being the most widely read UFO article among Rachel residents. All were amused by the reference to the Little A'Le'Inn:

> Far Out: What kind of read did you have of Mr. Travis from the Lil'Ale'Inn? Have you heard rumors of his being Air Force Intelligence?
>
> Bob & Ray: Travis' bread and butter is military money, it's not your mom-'n'-pop UFOies from Los Angeles or Phoenix. It's a logical conclusion that they would have a site, for people from L.A. or elsewhere, and they'd run human intelligence on folks with loose lips. I wouldn't doubt that he gets kickbacks.
>
> Just the intel they gather from people that come in, it's an invaluable source. Hypothetically, it's a great investment. It's an easy crop for Mr. Travis; it's all a ruse for intelligence. The black mailbox is a control point for surveillance of Groom goers.

When this article first came out, someone gave a copy of it to Joe who showed proudly it to everyone who came in the bar. Hardly any of the Travis's income comes from the military, and if you knew Joe and his anti-government rhetoric, you'd see he wouldn't make a very good intelligence officer (lacking that first word).

I wouldn't doubt that the military is collecting some kind of intelligence in Rachel, but mostly from the newspapers. The military certainly has the technical ability to plant bugs and spies all over town, but the number of thinking analysts it has to sift this information will always be limited. There would have to be people listening to all those bugs and debriefing all those spies, and with 99.99% of what happens at the Inn being totally benign, it would have to be one of the dullest jobs in the world. I suspect that this *Viewer's Guide* has provided the security forces with more useful intelligence about what the watchers might be up to than they have ever received from their own sources.

"Strange Camp-Out at Area 51." Article by Don Ecker in *UFO Magazine*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1993, p. 12, 4 pages. A group of civilian adventurers, camping out on Campfire Hill, find themselves excessively unconscious at night and suspect that they were gassed by security forces. The evidence appears to be circumstantial and even a bit silly, and it would take a lot more to convince me that "my guys" would do a thing like that. The notion of the security dudes snooping around the campsite is not far fetched, because I have been followed on foot on occasion, and the dudes must wear those nifty cammo outfits for *some* reason. I have no direct evidence of them actually interfering with a visitor, however, and "gassing" a civilian to keep him down would be enormously risky for them. They must know that it would be a foolishly illegal act that could easily blow up in a court case.

The bright, golden, hovering light the adventurers report at the end of the article sounds to me like one of my old friends, the parachute-borne magnesium flares, probably well outside Dreamland south of Papoose Lake and probably used in conjunction with a ground exercise.

⇒"Area 51, Bob Lazar, and Disinformation—A Reevaluation." A talk given by George Knapp at the MUFON International Symposium, Richmond, VA, July 1993. The text of the speech (24 pages) is published in *MUFON 1993 International Symposium Proceedings*, available from MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Sequin, TX 78155 ($20 plus $1.50 postage). A highly recommended "status report" on the Area 51 investigation by the foremost journalist involved in it. Unlike most UFO articles in magazines, this is a "primary source" containing a lot of information not found elsewhere. An excerpt:

> It now appears likely that another land grab is in the works. Congressional personnel have been warned that White Sides Mountain will soon be seized, possibly within a matter of months. Some rural Nevadans have heard about the plan and are mobilizing. They argue that, since the Cold War is over and since the Russians or anyone else can already spy on the base from space, the only people being denied a peek are American Citizens and Congress
>
> Without question, Congressional interest in the facility is growing. At least three Congressional-level delegations have visited 51 in the past year, and in Washington, increasing scrutiny is being focused on civilian contracts related to Groom. Congress wants to know what's going on there. One recent visitor was completely dazzled by whatever it was he saw. Although he would not violate confidentiality restrictions, he said that, whatever we got out there is decades ahead of the rest of the world. Does this mean aircraft, drones, or what? Groom may be home to a whole range of advanced programs. Witnesses have described a ferocious roar splitting the sky, and have assumed they were listening to an engine, possibly that of Aurora. From what I've been told, they are probably wrong. The sounds may be emanating from some sort of powerful advanced sonic weapon.

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Knapp's remarks notwithstanding, I have always had difficulty accepting the notion that the folks at Groom are light-years ahead of the rest of us. Knapp's source says they are decades ahead, while others have claimed it is fifty or a hundred years, leaving us pitiful civilians back in the Stone Age. Of course, if alien spacecraft were in military possession, those claims might be true; otherwise, given the oppressive bureaucracy and inefficiency the military and its contractors are known for, it is hard to imagine them getting too far ahead of known technology. The FAS "Mystery Aircraft" report [See "Secret Aircraft" references below.] suggests that, historically, secret military technology is usually no more than five years ahead of known technology. Secrecy itself discourages creativity and the healthy exchange of information upon which technology is built. It is hard to believe, with the defense industry exhibiting so many failures in its known programs, that its top secret programs can be much more efficient.

MUFON Journal reported on the MUFON symposium in its Sept. 1993 issue, with a summary of Knapp's talk on pages 9-10.

"Saucer Scouts: UFO caravans cross the former stomping ground of the notorious U2." Article by A.J.S. Rayl in Omni Magazine, August 1993, page 75, one page. Follows conspiracy buff Gary Schultz on his last expedition to the area (before he self-destructed at the aptly named "Ultimate UFO Seminar").

The Little A'Le'Inn is featured in a cover story by Joshua Good in Las Vegas *New Times*, a tabloid distributed free around the city. July 8, 1993, 4 pages. Includes an invitation to all the folks in Vegas to "come on up."

"The Ultimate UFO Seminar," cover story by Dennis Stacy in *MUFON UFO Journal*, June 1993, page 3, 6 pages. Report on the "conference to end all conferences," including a visit to White Sides and a recap of the Lazar story.

"Area 51 Encounter." Article by Bill Hamilton article in *MUFON UFO Journal*, August 1993, page 14, 4 pages. Hamilton and a companion report their abduction by aliens from Milepost LN 26.1 on Highway 375 on the night of March 16, 1993.

> Events started happening fast. The first light appeared to be an object the size of a bus with square light panels lifting off from the ground! The panels appeared to glow amber and blue-white. The object was tilting to the right. Then, the lights rapidly resolved into two glowing orbs or discs of brilliant blue-white light that steadily increased in brilliance. These lights became so bright that they hurt my eyes and were still getting more brilliant all the time....
>
> I remember saying that they were coming to get us....
>
> Copyright 1993 by the Mutual UFO Network, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Sequin, TX 78155.

I was in Rachel when the reported event occurred (asleep, of course), but I happened to talk to the two the morning after. I can at least confirm that they were indeed staying here and that they were out in the desert when they said they were. About the rest of the story, I can make no judgment. According to the article, the couple engaged in hypnosis sessions with John Lear and Yvonne Smith which brought out details of their being taken aboard a ship and communicating with an alien named Quaylar (with a little Star Trek communicator on his shirt). Hamilton concludes:

> I have had others report missing-time experiences in the Tikaboo Valley. My impression is that this has nothing to do with test flying discs from Area S-4. Something alien resides in this section of Nevada and has found an interest in visitors who come to watch the skies around Area 51.

This kind of story is out of my field, since I prefer to focus on events I can easily check out. I should point out, however, that the companion claims previous abductions elsewhere. Maybe it is the people who are special and not the place.

"New Line Nabs Pic Based on Gov't UFO Scientist." This short article in *Daily Variety*, the newspaper of the entertainment industry (June 11, 1993, page 5, 1 page), announces that the Bob Lazar movie deal. Alas, it still hasn't happened.

> The life story of former U.S. government UFO scientist Bob Lazar that was recently put into turnaround by Guber-Peters Prod. has been put on an earthly fast track by New Line Cinema for director Chuck Russell, according to Michael De Luca, New Line's exec Veepee/CEO.
>
> "We went after it because we think there's something primal in people's fascination with [unidentified flying objects] and people thinking that it's true," De Luca told Daily Variety.
>
> New Line finalized the deal for the untitled film on Wednesday after Lazar considered competing offers from producer Steve Tisch, Simpson-Burckheimer Prods and actor Steven Seagal, De Luca said.

"In Rachel, Things Are Looking Up." Article by Rob Powers in *Nevada Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 1993, page 72, 4 pages. Describes the Little A'Le'Inn and saucer watching chiefly from the tourist standpoint. Good color pictures of Pat and Joe and the watchers at a seminar. This article is a lot like others in commercial publications; what is interesting is that this glossy, generally bland tourist magazine is published by the state government. You can't get more mainstream than that. The article even includes ordering information for this *Viewer's Guide*, which would seem to imply that it is no longer a subversive publication. Where did I go wrong? Back issues may be available from *Nevada Magazine*, 1800 Hwy. 50 East, Carson City, NV 89710. Subscriptions are $14.95 per year (6 issues).

"An Interview with Sean Morton" appears in *Steamshovel Press*, #8, 1993, p. 12, 3 pp. [Steamshovel Press, Box 23715, St. Louis, MO 63121.] Yet another exercise in ego and hyperbole for "The World's Foremost UFO Researcher."

> I conduct tours to the area. Every month we get probably about fifteen or twenty people or so, some of them who believe, some of them who don't believe, and we jump on a bus and go out and camp in the [Tikaboo] valley and they see UFOs. I forget—because I've seen so many of them myself now out there—what a religious experience it is for people to actually see these discs in the sky just start making all these wild maneuvers and zipping back and forth. So many of these people have said, "all I really want to do in my life is actually see one of these things," and there they are for all to see.

I can make no judgment about the UFOs that Morton always sees, since, as he points out, it's a religious experience. As for the size of the tour, my observations indicate it was more like five or six people every two to three months (and not at all for the past year), which is still a profitable enterprise at $99 a head. [Thanks to D.S.]

⇒"An Interview with Robert Lazar." Transcript of a private question and answer session with Lazar during the May 1993 "Ultimate UFO Seminar." *MUFON UFO Journal, October 1993*. Page 8, 7 pages. Transcribed by John Kirby. [See other transcript in "Conference Programs" section below.]

"Priority of Priorities: What Is Being Seen Over Groom Lake?" Flying Saucer Review (U.K.), Winter 93.

UFO Book Chapters.

The following books contain chapters on Lazar or Area 51. I will limit this list to authors who have conducted some on-site research. Nearly all available UFO books can be purchased from Arcturus Book Service, 1443 S.E. Port St. Lucie Blvd., Port St. Lucie, FL 34952. Write for their catalog.

⇒*UFOs and the Alien Presence: Six Viewpoints.* Book of interviews edited by Michael Lindemann, 1991, 233 pages. Contains a lengthy interview with Bob Lazar (pages 87-127). Recommended reading if you want to look more deeply into his story, as a supplement to the KLAS broadcasts. Order for $12.95 plus $2 postage (plus $1.00 sales tax for CA residents) from The 2020 Group, 3463 State Street #264, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, or call (805) 682-8185 for credit card orders. In addition to the Lazar interview, the book contains the following comments on Lazar by prominent ufologist Stanton Friedman (page 54-55), who himself is a nuclear physicist:

> I've had one telephone conversation with Bob Lazar. I've tried to check on him. That was my first response when I heard about him. Who is this guy, what's his background, what can we find out? I checked the American Physical Society, and there's nobody by that name listed. I checked MIT, Caltech and Cal State Northridge, and none of them have ever heard of him. I checked Pierce College. He did attend an electronics course back before 1977, which hardly makes him a far-out physicist.
>
> There is certainly classified work going on at Groom Lake, Area 51, Nellis Air Force Base and all these places around Las Vegas. And there are certainly underground bases there. You've got to hide from the Soviet overflights. Satellites go over there every day, maybe every couple of hours. So that part of his story is OK.
>
> I've listened to Bob on tape, and I'm impressed that he's a sharp guy. I have no way to justify saying yea or nay to his notions about element 115, matter-antimatter and all the other stuff that he talks about. The thing is, we don't even have a gram of element 115. We do make anti-matter in various accelerators. But Bob said nothing that would give me a real handle on checking. That's good and bad at the same time. If he were indeed doing what he said he's been doing, you'd expect him to know something the rest of us don't know. I've heard nothing that would immediately say to me that he's not a physicist.
>
> But I'm bothered when I can't check somebody out, frankly, because a professional person should leave a trail. He was supposed to send me his resume, and I've been waiting. I haven't received anything from him. Some people claim that he's a fraud, but I won't say that yet. He's in my gray basket too.

Revelations: Alien Contact and Human Deception, a 1991 book by prominent ufologist Jacques Vallee, contains a short, highly critical chapter on Lazar, pages 224-230. Vallee's own visit to the guard house on Groom Lake Road is recorded in the prologue, pages 1-3. Vallee dismisses Lazar in seven pages, rather short shrift given the complexity of Lazar's tale. The evidence he cites comes from his single interview with Lazar in March 1990. He quotes Lazar regarding the equipment he had on his lab bench at S-4, his memory for dates and the liquid he says he drank, and Vallee seems to find grounds for argument on each count. His dismissive tone in the book seems to conflict with his own statement, on camera, to George Knapp immediately following the interview:[74]

> He [Lazar] seems very credible. I think that he was in the places that he described. He also seemed to have concern with remembering parts of the things that went on there. He seemed to—if you remember, we asked him if he felt that his memory might have been tampered with. Now that is something that I think should be of concern as we explore his story. Could it be that he was exposed deliberately to certain things perhaps to distract attention from other things. But I am certainly of the opinion that he is not lying, that he is telling the truth and that he is genuinely concerned with finding out what happened to him.

At *The Ultimate UFO Seminar* on May 1, 1993 (See Conference Programs), Lazar was asked to respond to Vallee's suggestion that his story could not be genuine because of the primitive equipment he described on his workbench. Lazar's reply:

> This is another thing that's gotten so twisted. Jacques Vallee, who's a UFO writer of some sort, came to see me in Las Vegas. I don't remember how long ago it was, but after the George Knapp thing. He came down with some producers from Universal Studios who was [sic] going to make a movie about his book Intruders... not Intruders, that's someone else... Dimensions, or something. Anyway, they came down with him, and they said, Well, we want to know what you think of this. Just give us your opinion if this jives. I looked at the information, and he explained it to me, and I said, That has nothing to do with the craft that I worked on or any of the technology that I was involved in. Period. And Jacques really didn't appreciate that, but they asked for my opinion. So I said, as far as the conclusions he's drawn, I don't agree them; I think they're completely wrong, and so on and so forth. So he really didn't like me after that point. And so he began to interview me and he said, Well, what did you do here and here, and I went over things... And this is on tape, so I don't see even why he would make a fuss of it, but he said, Well, what kind of equipment did you have to work with? And I said, a wide variety of different things. And he said, we what about at your bench, what was on your bench? I said, Anything you find at

[74] As broadcast on Part II of *UFOs: The Best Evidence*.

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a normal tech bench. I said oscilloscopes, DVMs, things like that. And he said, Okay. And later I heard through the grapevine that he's out doing a lecture: Bob Lazar said he back engineered the flying saucers with an oscilloscope and a DVM. I mean, it was on tape, and I think a lot of that's he's really pretty pissed at me for shooting down the movie, but I had no idea that was going to be the effect, or else I would have reserved my opinion. It's just the way it goes.

⇒*Alien Liaison* (also published as *Alien Contact*), a book by British ufologist Timothy Good, contains several lengthy chapters on Lazar and Dreamland, page 138, 75 pages total. Well researched and highly recommended review of the Lazar case. Contains a lot of details no found in print elsewhere, including the text of Lazar's original KLAS "Dennis" interview (pages 150-152).

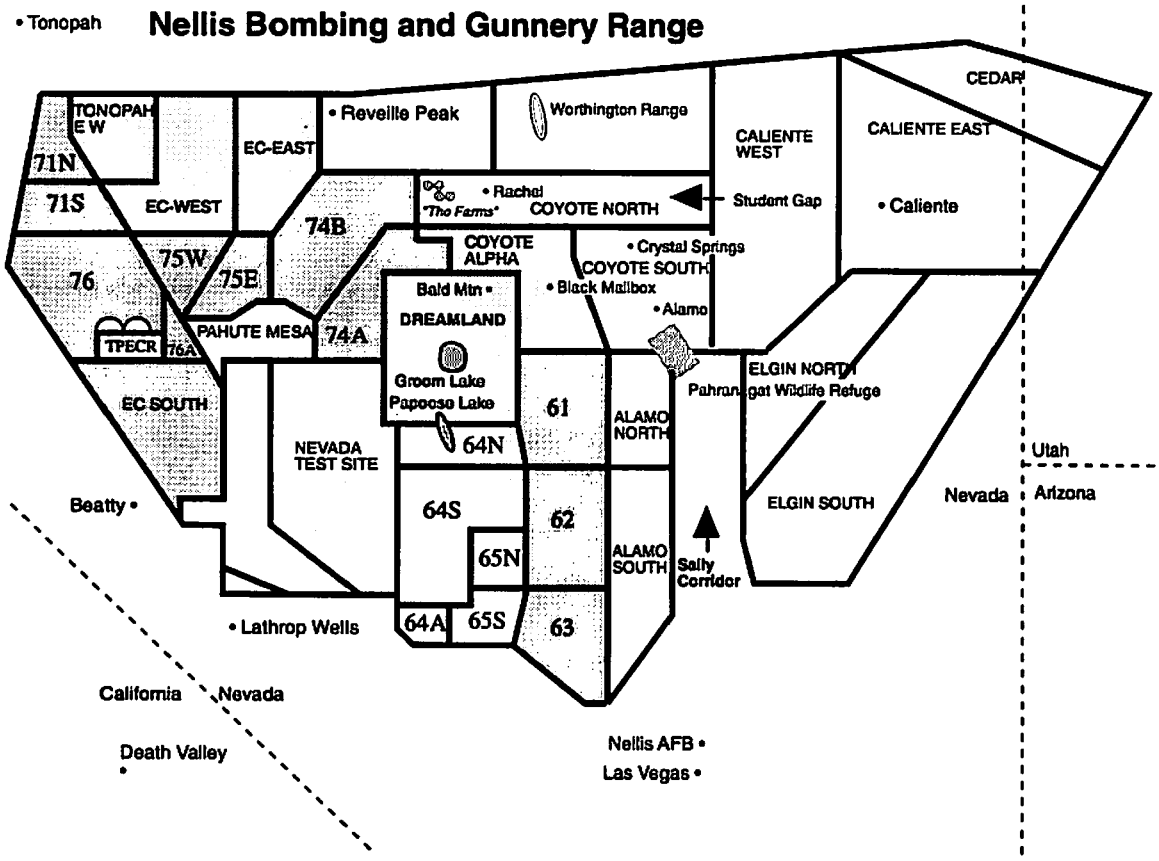
Alien Harvest, the cattle mutilation book by Linda Moulton Howe, 1989, is said to have an interview with someone who worked at Dreamland on pgs. 214-221. [Thanks to F.F.]

UFO Crash at Aztec, by Steinman and Stevens, is said to have some interesting asides about Area 51. [Thanks to F.F.]

UFOs, MJ-12 and the Government, a book by T. Scott Crain, Jr., and Grant Cameron, contains a chapter on Lazar and Dreamland. [Not reviewed.]

Behold a Pale Horse, by William Cooper, 1991. I see the phrase "Area 51" sprinkled throughout the pages of this conspiracy book, but I haven't been able to get into it. This thick tome is so rich with "supporting materials"—government documents, letters praising Bill Cooper, etc.—that I find it difficult to figure out what Cooper is saying. My tentative analysis: unabashed obfuscation. Nonetheless, this book sells well at the Little A'Le'Inn (where *all* the conspiracies are real), and I strongly recommend that you not get in an argument with any of Cooper's pugilistic, gun-toting supporters.[75]

Cosmic Top Secret, by William Hamilton. Discusses, among other things, vast tunnel networks connecting major undergound bases, including Groom.



Secret Aircraft

Red Flag: Air Combat for the 80's. Book by Michael Skinner, Presidio Press, 1984. Original edition is out of print, but available for reference in Special Collections at the UNLV Dickinson Library. (A new edition, not reviewed, appears to be available from Motorbooks. See below.) This short book for aviation enthusiasts describes "Red Flag," the most prominent air exercise held several times a year in the Nellis Range and responsible for much of the buzz around Rachel. Many aspects of this exercise have probably changed since this book was written, but it still contains a lot of useful insight into the air activity you are sure to see overhead. This book confirms the existence of a sector known as "Dreamland," encompassing Groom Lake and the northern half of Papoose Lake, and there appears to be nothing particularly secret about the term. However, one apparently innocuous reference to it (page 64) is the subject of debate among some UFO proponents:

[75]They tend, as a demographic group, toward the martial arts and will tolerate no disrespect toward their master.

Actual live bombing is done only on the numbered ranges—dropping live ordnance on the live citizens underneath the Military Operating Areas or on the Dreamland Munchkins is *not done*.

What, exactly, does "Dreamland Munchkins" mean? Some saucer proponents say it is a reference to little gray aliens, and it is conceivable that rumors of an alien presence could have filtered into pilots' slang.[76] Also appearing in this book (page 62) is a schematic map of the Nellis Range as seen by exercise participants. The figure above is an abstract of that map, with some local landmarks added based on the DMA Nellis Range Chart. "Student Gap" is the corridor immediately south of Rachel through which participants fly en route to mock battles, usually in the shaded sectors to the west. (On a weekday, dozens of jets can be seen passing through the corridor between Rachel and Bald Mtn.) The irrigation circles of Penoyer Farms, near Rachel, are well known to pilots, since they are among the few distinctive landmarks in the exercise area.

Red Flag. Book by Hall & Skinner, 1993. 128 pp. An update of the previous Red Flag book, with the "Munchkin" reference removed. Available for $14.95 from Motorbooks or the Area 51 Research Center.

"Multiple Sightings of Secret Aircraft Hint at New Propulsion, Airframe Designs." Article in *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, Oct. 1, 1990, page 18, 6 pages. Review of various "Black Budget" conventional aircraft, including several exotic triangular-shaped craft. The articles above are probably more up-to-date regarding the Aurora, but this and other *Aviation Week* articles provide some of the background evidence. The following articles are related to this one:

Dec. 24, 1990, p. 41: "Scientists' and Engineers' Dreams Taking to Skies as 'Black' Aircraft."

June 10, 1991, p. 20: "Triangular Recon Aircraft May Be Supporting F-117A." Concerns the secret TR-3A, which looks like what Batman flies.

Oct. 28, 1991, p. 68: Pulse detonation wave engine.

Nov. 11, 1991, p. 15: Unusual sonic booms over Los Angeles. Short item.

Nov. 25, 1991, p. 23: Unusual sonic booms over Los Angeles. Short item.

Mar. 9, 1992, p. 66: Unknown pulse-type aircraft seen at Beale AFB.

May 11, 1992, p. 62: "New Evidence Bolsters Reports of Secret, High-Speed Aircraft." Photographs show donut-on-a-rope contrails seen in Texas.

A curious and cryptic passage appears in the *Jane's* aircraft annual, 1989-90, page 526:

STRATEGIC RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT

According to early 1988 press reports, US Defense Department officials have confirmed that a new long-range reconnaissance aircraft is being developed to replace the USAF's SR-71, which was scheduled to be retired from service i n October 1989. The only details given were that the new aircraft is being designed for speeds of up to 3,300 knots (6,100 km/h; 3,800 mph) and altitudes of above 30,500 m (100,000 ft), will have in-flight refueling capability, and will employ the latest low-observables 'stealth" design techniques and materials. It is generally believed that Lockheed's Burbank division is the prime contractor.

This single paragraph sheds no light on what the original references were.

"Shooting the Stealth." Article by Elaine de Man in *Air & Space Smithsonian*, Sept. 1990, page 92, 2 pages. Follows aviation experts Jim Goodall and John Andrews on their hunt for Stealth aircraft. Although they are hanging out at the fence line of the Tonopah Test Range, about 80 miles from Groom, their philosophy is the same...

Here, on public property, they are prepared to challenge anyone who challenges them. "What they have out here is a very classified airplane," says Goodall, "a very secret program. But it's not the Air Force's airplane. It's owned by the taxpayers of the United States of America."

"This is my property," Andrews says, waving his arm back toward town. "That is also my property," he says, pointing to the land on the other side of the fence. "But this," he says, pointing down, "is the property I can walk on. We draw the line at doing anything illegal. But we are not afraid of going right up to that line—that's what we're doing at the fence, we're right at the limit."

If the military doesn't want these airplanes photographed, Goodall adds, it "better keep them out of the sky or fly them out of someplace I can't get to."

"America's New Secret Aircraft." Article in *Popular Mechanics*, Dec. 1991 (Page 33, 4 pages). Essentially an older version of the *Popular Science* article (below), probably already out of date regarding Aurora.

"Advanced Hypersonic Aircraft Design." A recent study commissioned by Nasa on the hypothetical design of Aurora-like craft. This 80 page report by Ohio State University suggests some plausible Aurora characteristics, although the report itself is too recent to have contributed to any actual craft. Available from NTIS, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Springfield, VA 22161. $19.50 plus $3 shipping per order. Document number: N93-18037-0-XAB. A second technical report for the Navy, "Hypersonic Reconnaissance Aircraft." has not been reviewed. Same price. Doc. number: N93-17804-4-XAB. [Thanks to P.M.]

⇒"Mystery Aircraft." A report by Dr. John E. Pike, et al, sponsored by the Federation of American Scientists, published Aug. 20, 1992, 94 page. Available for $8.00, postpaid, from the Federation of American Scientists, 307 Massachusetts Ave. N.E., Washington, DC 20002. This is an in-depth review of the evidence for and against the existence of still-classified secret aircraft. Essential reading for Aurora scholars, but also of interest to UFO buffs seeking clandestine government saucer

[76] Personally, I have my doubts. I interpret "Munchkin" as a generic term referring to any employee of the Federal government.

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programs, which, if they exist, ought to be hiding in similar bureaucratic niches. One part of this report analyses government budget data, on the assumption that any program the government is engaged in must appear *somewhere* in the Federal budget. Often, secret programs are funded under obscure headings like "Special Programs" and "Selected Activities" but the details below these headings can often be deduced by subtracting the budgets of known programs. The budget analysis conducted by the report's authors can find no source of funding for the many billions that would be required for a large fleet of Aurora planes, but funding can be found (under "Special Update Program") for an experimental program of only a few prototypes, costing no more than $700 million annually.

We can extend this budget analysis to UFO research. If the government is indeed engaged in a UFO-related development program, like the "reverse engineering" project Lazar describes, it cannot be any larger than the Aurora project; otherwise, where would the funding come from? Certainly, there cannot be sufficient unallocated Federal funds for the vast underground cities and baby-stealing operations that some conspiracy buffs propose. If a UFO-related government program exists, it could only remain hidden if the annual budget were in the measly millions, not billions. On the other hand, similar reasoning might lead us to the conclusion that if Aurora is a disinformation ploy and does not exist, then that would leave $700 million that could be spent on saucers, Frankenstein experiments or whatever other nefarious government program your imagination can dream up.

Some of the report's speculations about classified aircraft might be applied equally to UFOs:

> The first problem that confronts the student of the mystery aircraft phenomenon is the embarrassment of riches. Accepting the reality of all of the various vehicles whose existence has been suggested implies a covert aircraft development program that dwarfs the efforts officially acknowledged by the US government. While one might be prepared to accept the existence of one or two such programs, the bewildering array of exotic vehicles reported in the literature surpasses reasonable expectation. Surely at least some of these are the product of mistaken identity or some other sort of mischief.
>
> The entire mystery aircraft phenomenon is characterized by a very low signal to noise ratio. While there may be a signal in there somewhere, there is also clearly a lot of noise. One source of this noise may be honest cases of mistaken identification of conventional phenomena by field observers, or improper interpretation by budget analysts.
>
> But the possible role of active disinformation must also be recognized as a potential source of the noise that seems to obscure the signal. Prior secrecy efforts had only limited success in protecting pertinent details of the F-117A, B-2 and A-12 programs, and essentially failed to protect the fact of the existence of these programs.
>
> Given this poor track record, it is certainly conceivable that those responsible for protecting both the existence and characteristics of ongoing classified aircraft projects have taken a different approach. Rather than trying to protect a single program that actually exists, perhaps they have chosen to create a series of imaginary decoy programs, which would protect the real aircraft projects in much the way decoys protect ballistic missile warheads from interception by anti-missile defenses.

This report triggered many newspaper and magazine articles, most of which add no new information. Among these: "Signs suggest military testing new high-speed craft." *Las Vegas Review-Journal* (from *Newsday*), Sept. 20, 1992, page 5A, 1 page.

"Hypersonic Aurora: a secret dawning." Article by Bill Sweetman in *Jane's Defense Weekly*, Dec. 12, 1992, page 14, 3 pages. Reports on the sighting of an unknown triangular craft being refueled over the North Sea, and the implications derived from it. Unless you work for the aerospace industry, *Jane's* is very hard to find, but this article is adequately summarized in the *Wall Street Journal* article below, and the *Popular Science* article below expands upon it.

"Evidence Points to Secret U.S. Spy Plane: Magazine Suggest Aircraft Has Flown Mach 8 for Years." Article in the *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 4, 1992, 1 page. A retelling of the *Jane's* article.

"The Mystery Plane: If Anyone's Seen It, No One Is Talking." Article by John Mintz in *Washington Post Weekly*, Dec. 21-27, 1992, 1 page. Reports on the possible existence of Aurora, based on the Jane's article and the Federation report. Also records the unusually strenuous denials from many official and unofficial sources in Washington. In the past, the Air Force's response to inquiries about secret aircraft has been some form of "No comment," but in the case of Aurora, the response is more committal: "The Air Force has no such program, period." Other sources queried by Sen. John Glenn also deny there is any such program, and he says he believes them.

America's Stealth Fighters and Bombers. Photo book (195 pages, published 1992) by aviation "spy" James Goodall, who has done his share of snooping around Area 51. Unfortunately, the Stealth is now yesterday's secret and isn't seen much around Groom Lake anymore. This book is listed here because it contains a high quality, full-page photograph of the Groom Lake base taken from White Sides (page 21). The book can be ordered for $19.95 plus shipping from Motorbooks at (800) 458-0454.

"Rumors of U.S. Superplane Appear Unfounded." Article in *The New York Times*, Jan. 19, 1993 (1 page). A curious and clumsy article suggesting that the Aurora spy plane does not exist, based on the "Mystery Aircraft" report. Includes quotes from that report, but they appear to have been taken out of context. One suspects that the reporter was facing a deadline and did not have time to read the whole report. Nonetheless, this article does contain some interesting elements. The position of the Air Force, of course, is that the plane does not exist, but they are unusually strenuous in their denials....

> The Air Force, which operated the SR-71, the U-2 spy plane (which gained notoriety in 1960 when one was shot down over the Soviet Union) and reconnaissance satellites on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency, emphatically denies the existence of a super spy plane. Donald B. Rice, Secretary of the Air Force, said last month that reports of such an aircraft are "fantasy."

An Air Force spokesman said: "We have looked into all such sightings, as we have for U.F.O. reports, and we cannot explain them. No Air Force aircraft were operating at the times and places of the alleged sightings."

The spokesman's denial may indeed be truthful if the plane is being operated by a different government agency, like the National Reconnaissance Office. The reference to UFOs is curious, however, since the Air Force has frequently denied that it even "looks into" UFO reports.

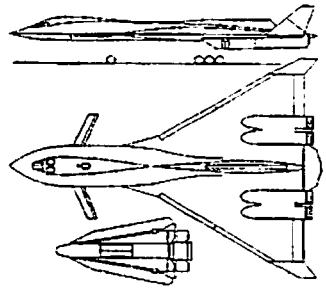
⇒"Spy Plane: America's $1 billion high flying 4,400 mph ramjet." Cover story by Bill Sweetman in *Popular Science*, March 1993, page 56, 10 pages. The latest word on the Aurora spy plane, as well as several other rumored secret craft. Essential reading, available at your public library.[77] This article also includes a photo of the secret Groom Lake base taken from White Sides (the same one shown in the Goodall book). Thus, there are now 1.2 million photos of this base floating around—hardly a secret anymore.

This *Viewer's Guide* is favorably reviewed, under the title "Meeting the Challenge of Government Secrecy," in the August/September 1993 issue of *Secrecy and Government Bulletin*, published by the Federation of American Scientists. [See "Mystery Aircraft" report above for address.] This newsletter has no professed interest in UFOs, only "To Challenge Excessive Government Secrecy and To Promote Public Oversight and Free Exchange In Science, Technology, Defense, and Intelligence." Editor Steven Aftergood says...

> For all it's flippancy and deliberate epistemological murkiness, the Viewer's Guide is a work of real transformative power. Campbell seizes on the extravagant security measures intended to conceal Groom Lake and effectively turns them into a spotlight on the facility.

This review lead to a 3-paragraph capsule review in *Inside the Pentagon*, Sept. 2, 1993, page 17.

⇒*Aurora—The Pentagon's Secret Hypersonic Spyplane*, book by Bill Sweetman, Motorbooks, 1993. For a plane that the military insists does not exist, the documentation is certainly extensive. Former *Jane's* and *Interavia* journalist Sweetman lays out the evidence and historical perspective leading to an inescapable conclusion: It can't *not* exist. This is the latest word on Aurora, presumed to be operating from Groom Lake. This book is also an excellent reference on previous supersonic aircraft, the "ancestors" of Aurora. 96 pages, soft cover, $9.95. Available from Area 51 Research Center.



"Groom Lake's secret revealed?" An article (apparently by Bill Sweetman) in *International Defense Review*, Sept. 10, 1993, pg. 706, 1 pg. Describes a Black Budget airplane, distinct from Aurora, which is apparently used to carry smaller craft aloft, possibly as part of a two-stage-to-orbit system for launching satellites. This craft, known to aviation buffs as the "Mothership," resembles an XB-70 bomber and could conceivably be based at Groom in the big "barn" hanger that dominates the flightline.

Groom Lake History

For those who are interested in the history of Groom Lake and the previous secret projects there, somes readers have offered these books for further reference. For some of these items, I have added the item number and price from Zenith Books, an aviation book seller. 800-826-6600.

—*Dragon Lady: The History of the U-2 Spyplane*, by Chris Pocock, Airlife Publishing, 1989. This includes material on the founding of Groom Lake and the early test operations, through 1960. [Zenith item #114043AP, $12.98?] [C.P.]

—*Lockheed SR-71: The Secret Missions Exposed*, by Paul F. Crickmore, Osprey Aerospace, 1993. Covers the development and operation of the A-12, D-21, and SR-71. Includes photos taken at Groom. [C.P.]

—*The Oxcart Story*, by Thomas P. McInich, Central Intelligence Agency, 1986. This is a declassified 25-page history of the A-12 Oxcart. It includes material on the expansion of Groom Lake to support test operations. [C.P.]

—*Lockheed Skunk Works*, by Steve Pace, Motorbooks, 1992. Chapter 13 is nearly a word-for-word copy of *The Oxcart Story*. [Zenith Books item #117514AP, $24.95.] [C.P.]

—*Lockheed*, by Yenne, Bill, Crescent Books, 1987. Contains this brief reference...

> Because the U-2 project was so secret, its development took place not in Burbank, but at the Lockheed facility in the Mojave Desert at Palmdale. When the time came for flight testing, the U-2 was transported not to the Air Force test flight center at Edwards AFB, but to a secret airfield constructed on a dry lake bed at Groom Lake in the Nevada desert, cynically named 'Paradise Ranch'. Kelly Johnson was later to recall that the name Paradise Ranch was used 'because we thought it would attract people' to come to work there on the U-2 project. Johnson was to add that the misleading name was 'kind of a dirty trick since Paradise Ranch was a dry lake where quarter-inch rocks blew around every afternoon'. [C.H.]

—*Electronic Spies*, a book in the Time-Life Series, "The New Faces of War," 1991 [Available for $14.99 plus postage, 800-621-7026.]. On Page 36 is a full-page Soviet satellite photo of the Groom Lake base, taken July 17, 1988. This photo was computer enhanced by Paul Reilly. Unfortunately, he also took some creative liberties, including fake Russian labels. Nonetheless, this may be the most detailed satellite photo available to the public, worth the price of the book. [G.C.]

—*Lockheed U-2*, by Jay Miller, 1983, Aerofax, P.O. Box 5337, Austin, TX 78763. Contains pictures taken at Groom Lake, an account of how the site was chosen and its role in U-2 development.

—*Black Magic*, by Michael O'Leary and Edward Schulzinger, Afterlife Publishing. Contains an account of the founding of

[77] If you are secretly interested in UFOs but don't want to come out of the closet, I suggest reading this article before you come and bone up on the secret aircraft stories. Then you can claim that you are an aviation buff looking for Aurora, thus avoiding the stigma of being associated with those "saucer people."

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the Groom Lake. [G.W.]

—"Dreamland" appears extensively in the military fiction of Dale Brown, in his novels *Flight of the Old Dog*, *Day of the Cheetah* and *Sky Masters*, and Tom Clancy mentions Dreamland in Chapter 17 of *Red Storm Rising*, referring to the "Frisbees of Dreamland." [F.F.]

—*Nellis: Home of "Red Flag."* No. 1 in the *Superbase* series. Pictures of planes mostly. [Zenith #112990AE, $17.95.]

—*Nellis Air Force Base.* A privately published "newcomers" guide to Nellis AFB intended mainly for new base personnel. This phone book style publication is packed with advertising for apartment complexes and other local services, but the first half gives a good overview of base operations, as prepared by the Nellis Public Affairs Office. You may be able to get a free copy by writing to: Nellis Air Force Base, Public Affairs Directorate, 4370 N. Washington Bl., Las Vegas, NV 89115. Ask for the "MARCOA Nellis directory."

1984 Groom Range Seizure

"Air Force will seek continued access restriction to secret base." News story in *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, Oct. 11, 1987, page 1B, 2 pages. Discusses the Air Force's seizure of the Groom Range three years before. Reviews the speculation about what might be happening at Groom Lake, including a pre-Lazar UFO claim:

> There is even a group of self-described UFO experts who say that Air Force memos indicate the shell of an alien aircraft that crashed in 1947 in New Mexico is kept at the facility.

Groom Range Seizure News Clippings. There are many other articles in Las Vegas newspapers concerning the original Groom Range seizure, too numerous to list here. For people who are seriously interested in this topic, I have put together photocopies of all the relevant articles I can find, taken from microfilm at the UNLV library. The document is approximately 80 pages altogether, assembled chronologically in a binder. Available for $20 plus $4 priority mail postage from: Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001.

"Groom Mountain Range, Nevada, Environmental Impact Statement." This document was required by law for the military to gain final approval of the original Groom Range seizure *after* they actually took control of the land. A draft version is dated Oct. 1985, and a final version was published Nov. 1986. There is almost no official information in the document about what the military intended to do with the land—"training" pretty much sums it up. This report concerns only the impact of the land's withdrawal from public use, not the impact of its subsequent use, or abuse, by the military. Given the military's long history of using Nevada as a classified dumping ground for toxic chemicals and munitions, this document is no more than a sham for its intended purpose of evaluating environmental effects. Nonetheless, there is a lot of fascinating information here.

The "Draft" and "Final" versions of this document are essentially separate works, with the Final report containing primarily responses to the Draft. The Draft is the best one to order for info on the flora, fauna and geography of the region. The Final report consists mostly of public comments and the government's responses to them; it is chiefly of political interest. They are available for $20 plus $4 postage from: Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001.

Other References

"Creating Superheavy Elements." Article by Peter Armbruster and Gottfried Münzenberg in *Scientific American*, May 1989 (page 66, 7 pages). This technical treatise suggests, as Lazar does, that certain heavy elements like 115 might indeed be stable and not decay immediately as generally assumed. However, the appearance of this article just before he went public has also raised the suggestion (put forward by anti-Lazar ufologist Bill Moore) that Lazar concocted his Element 115 claims based upon it. Lazar's friend Gene Huff replies, "Bob had told me and others about Element 115 long before May 1989." In any case, Lazar seems to allude to this article in *The Lazar Tape* and in his *On the Record* interview.

"The Search for the Missing Elements." Article by Walter Loveland and Glenn Seaborg in *New Scientist*, Aug. 31, 1991, page 29, 4 pages. Further technical information concerning the synthesis of heavy elements beyond 109. The authors have also written a book, *The Elements Beyond Uranium*, published in 1990. [Thanks to R. O., via J. K.]

Seeing and the Eye: A Introduction to Vision. Book by G. Hugh Begbie, published 1969 by The Natural History Press. A review for the layman of the physiology of the human visual system, probably only one of many similar books. Pages 152-158 contain a discussion of eye movements—saccades, tremor and drift—which could contribute to illusions of jumpy movement in an isolated light at night.

Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps. Book by Stanley W. Paher, 1970. Available from Nevada Magazine Merchandise for $39.95 (postpaid). Has something to say about most of the ghost towns in the area. Joe Travis at the Little A'Le'Inn has a copy behind the bar.

"The Hard Ride of Route 93." Article in *National Geographic*, December 1992. Follows US-93 on its 1860-mile run from Arizona to Alberta, passing within 20 miles of the Black Mailbox. There is only brief mention of the nearby town of Alamo and no talk of Highway 375 or UFOs, but a photograph of a nearby desert valley on page 50-51 gives an idea of the terrain.

"Stealth Corvette: One man's mission to become invisible." Article by Phil Berg in *Car & Driver*, May 1990 (page 125, 4 pages). Reports on an anonymous man name "Bob" who has supposedly equipped his Corvette to evade speed traps and possibly penetrate security at Groom Lake. A rip-off: The article is about the Corvette, not about Bob or Groom Lake.

The Day We Bombed Utah: America's Lethal Secret, a book by John G. Fuller, New American Library, 1984 (out of print). This book on the effects of atomic testing contains a chapter on the Sheahans, whose Groom Mine overlooks Groom Lake and the secret base. (Supposedly members of the family are still allowed to go there, although the surrounding land was taken in the

1984 Groom seizure. It seems unlikely that they go there often, however, and you can rest assured that they are not allowed to talk about what they see below.) The story concerns the disastrous effects of nuclear fallout from atomic testing, with no mention of the Groom base. [Thanks to P.M.]

Video Tapes

⇒*The Lazar Tape* is a 1990 VHS video tape by Bob Lazar in which he offers a "science lesson" on anti-gravity propulsion systems and describes his work at "Area S-4." 40 minutes. Available from a number of dealers, including Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001. ($29.00 plus $4 shipping.)

I was reluctant to buy this tape at first because I figured that if Lazar was a fraud I didn't want to be supporting him. However, I soon realized that the Black Mailbox *is* Bob Lazar: His claims brought the first major publicity to the area, and without him few people would be coming here. I finally bought it after hearing the testimonials of two aviation experts who know Lazar personally and felt that he was genuine. I can now report that whether it be fiction or fantasy, *The Lazar Tape* is intelligent and entertaining and a better buy for your money than, say, *Terminator 2* or a day at Disneyland. In this tape, Lazar lays out a plausible intellectual scenario of how flying saucers work and what his own experiences were.

The Lazar Tape is essentially a home video, but a very good one full of interesting information. Supposedly, a new version, professionally produced, is in the works to replace it (but this has been promised for a couple of years now).

UFOs and the Alien Presence, a VHS video tape produced by Michael Lindemann. Available for $12.95 plus $2 shipping (plus $1 tax for CA residents) from The 2020 Group, 3463 State Street #264, Santa Barbara, CA 93105, or (805) 682-8185 (credit card orders). 35 minutes. This tape is a review of the currently "hot" UFO topics: Area 51, crop circles, animal mutilations, abductions. The chief advantage of this tape is its low price. Included is a lengthy excerpt of the best parts of *The Lazar Tape* in which Lazar discusses his S-4 employment and general saucer design. Later, "World's Foremost UFO Researcher" Sean Morton, talks about saucer viewing at Area 51, but his comments appear to be a bit of an exaggeration.

> Probably the most amazing thing about Area 51 is the fact that this is literally the only place in the world where you can go out and actually see flying saucers on a timetable basis. You can literally go out there on a Wednesday night between about seven and one a.m. and you'll see these things flying up and down the valley. It's absolutely amazing. On even a bad night you'll have ten, eleven, twelve sightings. On a good night—and I've been out there with friends of mine camping—on a good night the sky will just rip open with these things. You'll see anywhere between twenty to forty objects in a night testing over the base for anywhere from fifteen and forty minutes at a time. You'll see these objects flying up and down the valley. We've had people where these objects have flown right over their heads as they've gotten out and fumbled for their cameras, and then shot away.

Reviewer's Comments: I, too, have seen "the sky rip open with these things." The only trouble is, in my experience, "these things" have always been conventional military and celestial activity. On more than one occasion, reputable aviation experts have been watching for Black Budget aircraft near where Morton and his commercial tour ($99 per person) were looking for flying saucers, and it is fascinating to compare the observations of the two groups. When Morton points to the sky and proclaims that he sees a UFO, the aviation experts usually see an identifiable phenomena, like a satellite, aircraft, infrared suppression flare or, more commonly, nothing at all. Morton may indeed have seen some interesting things on his visits to the area, but his credibility suffers from the Boy-Who-Cried-Wolf syndrome.

Project Red Light and *Project Red Light II*. Video tapes by conspiracy-oriented ufologist/confabulator Bill Cooper.[78] Available from: Annie Mordhorst, Box 1420, Show Low, AZ 85901. I have seen only the latest of these two videos, *Project Red Light II* (1 hour 46 min.), which is available for the very humorous price of $70.00.[79] This is a home video visit to the Tikaboo Valley and Little A'Le'Inn. For people who have never been here, this tape contains some good panoramic footage of the local terrain. The production is marred, however, by its excruciatingly slow pace: This... is... the... Tikaboo... Valley.... SLOOOOOW pan left.... SLOOOOOW pan right.... This reviewer was screaming and pulling his hair out. Mr. Cooper's shots of erratically moving aerial lights are intriguing, but we have to take his word for it that the lights are moving, not the camera. Pat and Joe Travis are interviewed, but the sound is terrible and the presentation very unflattering. The droning, humorless tone of the narrator further exacerbates the viewer's pain. I recommend watching this tape only in fast forward. [First tape not reviewed.]

Area 51: Eyes Only Video Guide. A 12-minute home video survey of the Highway 375 area: Little A'Le'Inn, White Sides, etc. Order for $12 plus $3 postage from: Ralph McCarron, P.O. Box 6061-186, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413. May be available at the Little A'Le'Inn. There's no new information here and no UFOs photographed, but this tape might be useful if you are housebound and want to see the area without leaving the comfort of your living room. Includes a map of the area.

UFOs: The Best Evidence. TV newsman George Knapp's new video series on UFOs, inspired by his original KLAS reports that introduced Bob Lazar. (See TV appearances below.) This new 1994 series, which I have not yet reviewed, is available for

[78] I do not claim to fully comprehend Mr. Cooper's ideas, but here's my best synopsis: It is his contention that Lazar is lying and that there are no alien flying saucers at Papoose Lake. Instead, the saucers are based at Groom Lake and are of human design and construction. The craft were first developed by the Nazis in WWII and are now the tool of a secret One World Government, which will soon use them to stage a mock alien invasion. The secret government will use the perceived threat as an excuse to abrogate human rights and expand its already insidious control over the population. The train of logic gets a little murky. Needless to say, AIDS, the Kennedy assassination, and bases on the Moon and on Mars all get thrown in for good measure.

[79] You can get the tape for only $35 (still laughable) if you join Mr. Cooper's Citizens Agency Joint Intelligence, a group whose principal purpose appears to be the worship of Mr. Cooper. I don't know what the membership fee is, but knowing Mr. C., I'm sure it ain't cheap.

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about $60 for a 3-tape set (or check your local video rental store). For a brochure, write: UFOs: The Best Evidence, P.O. Box 2249 Dept. H, Livonia, MI 45151.

Movies

The following theatrical movies, available at larger video stores, might give you a feeling for life out here in the middle of nowhere:

Paris, Texas. A man named Travis wanders alone through the desert and stumbles into the little town of Terlingua, Texas, a lot like Rachel, Nevada. This reviewer's favorite movie, although suffering from a total lack of UFOs.

Bagdad Cafe. On "a dusty road from Vegas to nowhere," here's a little place just like the Little A'Le'Inn, albeit overly romanticized.

Fool For Love. Weird and degenerate residents of a small motel/bar/cafe in the desert. Highly accurate, but not much fun.

Diamonds Are Forever. James Bond in Las Vegas. In addition to the usual Bond paraphernalia and a plot you know already, includes a reclusive billionaire in a casino penthouse, a slick commercial mortuary, a bad comic, a car chase through the neon and bimbos named Bambi, Thumper and Plenty. Captures the city in a nutshell.

Monty Python's Life of Brian. An obscure and unwilling messiah is pursued by fanatical followers who worship him relentlessly and interpret even his shoe as a sacred object. Accurately predicts the role now played by Bob Lazar. Ends with a public crucifixion, which, in Lazar's case, this may have already happened (and he survived), or it might be yet to come.

Red Flag: The Ultimate Game. A 1981 made-for-TV movie set at the Red Flag exercises on the Nellis Range, which account for much of the air activity near the Rachel. Contains some good aerial combat footage and stock shots of jets taking off at Nellis, but the story itself gets bogged down on the ground. Follows the usual melodrama formula: Two fighter jocks, one good (Barry Bostwick), one evil (William Devane), compete in the skies over Nevada, with a babe-ola thrown in for no good reason (Joan Van Ark). The plot culminates with a predictable air-to-air confrontation in which, as you might have guessed, William Devane ends up a grease spot in the desert. Although the Air Force initially cooperated with this production, it tried to distance itself from the embarrassing final product. Might not be available on video, but you can look for this one on late-night tube.

UFOria. Citizens of a small desert community wait under a revivalist tent for the UFOs to come, while a charlatan preacher tries to steal the show. Reminds me of the "Ultimate UFO Seminar" in May 1993. Highly recommended. The only disappointment is that the aliens *do* come in the end, spoiling the human story. I would like to rewrite the ending as follows: The aliens rescue our hero and heroine from their predicament, but they do not keep them; instead, they just plunk the couple down in another part of the desert out of harm's way. Once again, the two will have to fend for themselves, alone and without alien assistance, which is the human way. As they walk back to town, one of them asks the other, "What do we do now?"

Kalifornia. According to a reviews, this ultra violent road epic ends in a mannequin-filled house on a nuclear test site called 'DreamLand.' [Haven't seen it; don't plan to.]

Television Appearances

Lazar first became known to the world in a series of reports entitled *UFOs: The Best Evidence* broadcast on Las Vegas television station KLAS in Nov. 1989. (He also appeared anonymously in silhouette in a short May 1989 broadcast.) Most other programs were follow-ons to this series and, except for the *On the Record* interview, do not add much to it. To keep the list below manageable, the only shows I include are original broadcasts that have actually sent reporters to the field.[80] The dates of original broadcast have been difficult to confirm, but they all took place between Nov. 1989 and present.

These programs are listed primarily for the record, since they are difficult to obtain. Adequate substitutes are the "Lazar Tape" and George Knapp's new "Best Evidence" video series, both of which are available legitimately. (See Video Tapes above.)

If you feel compelled, you can obtain copies of most of the broadcasts below from unabashed pirate "Video Dave"[81] at UFO Audio-Video Clearing House, P.O. Box 342, Yucaipa, CA 92399, (909) 795-3361. Before

[80] I have not listed local-access cable TV shows, because there are so many of them and I have no way of knowing that they exist. However, I may consider listing specific shows if someone tells me about them and copies are available to the public.

[81] This guy must have a filing cabinet full of nasty letters from television station lawyers, most of which he has apparently ignored. As long as these broadcasts are not available from legitimate sources, Video Dave provides an important service. His proud career should be an example to all of us: the perfect marriage of civil disobedience and comfortable profit. I also heard unconfirmed rumors that Video Dave was the brave crusader who attached a video camera to a radio controlled model race car and sent it down the Groom Lake Road. The Wackendudes supposedly retrieved the car and returned it to Mr. Dave, with the stern admonishment that they never wanted to see him again. Surprisingly, our hero has complied, perhaps obeying the Ferengi code not to engage in unprofitable ventures.

When asked to comment on the above footnote, Video Dave denies it all. "The story about my remote car with a video camera placed on it is false." he writes. "Although we tried this in Yucaipa we never went to Groom Lake area to test this, only in California."

you order tapes from him, you need to become a Clearing House member for a one-time fee of $15. For your membership fee, you get an intimidating catalog of available video and audio programs—hundreds of shows ranging from 1 minute to several hours each. For videos, you select the programs you want, and they are assembled for you on a VHS tape. Cost is $30 per tape for up to 150 minutes of pirated programming per tape.

I have seen partial transcripts of a few of these broadcasts that were obtained from the "ParaNet" (Paranormal Network) Information Service bbs, by modem. For information on accessing the network, write: ParaNet, Box 928, Wheatridge, CO 80034 or email mcorbin@paranet.org.

⇒*UFOs: The Best Evidence.* A series of reports by George Knapp on the nightly newscasts of KLAS-TV, Las Vegas, beginning Nov. 10, 1989. In this reviewer's opinion, it is one of the best UFO programs ever broadcast, more thorough, intelligent and convincing than anything the networks have ever produced. The reports center on alleged government activities in Nevada. Bob Lazar comes out of the closet and speaks at length. Clearly, he is tense—not calm and rehearsed as in *The Lazar Tape*—and he gives off plenty of emotional cues that can be read for truthfulness. In this reviewer's opinion, if he isn't telling the truth, then he is a fine actor, capable not just of telling a lie but reproducing all the remembered details and unconscious nuances of it.

> Bob Lazar: I did not believe that this should be [uncomfortable pause] a security matter. Some of it, sure, but just the concept that there is definite proof and we even have articles from another world, another system. You just can't not tell everyone. A lot of people don't believe that, but I do.
>
> George Knapp (narrating): When he reached what felt like his bursting point he took Huff and a few others to the edge of the Groom Mountains to see the flights for themselves. A total of five witnesses on two consecutive weeks managed to dodge security patrols long enough to see the strange glowing object lift above the mountains.
>
> Gene Huff: It came above the same mountains. It moved around. It did a step move. It actually went [gestures] up in the air like this and hovered, then dropped way down. Then it just floated around and cruised around, and then it started coming up the mountain range.

The above is followed by a home video said to have been taken on one of the two trips. A camcorder imprint in the corner says, "PM 8:29, Mar. 29 1989" (a Wednesday). A bright object appears to perform the dramatic step-like moves that Huff describes.

> George Knapp: Admittedly, the tape proves very little by itself because with the distance and darkness there are no reference points other than the alleged flying disk, but Lazar's information about the time and location of the test flights proved correct, not once but twice. That according to our off-camera interviews with each of the other witnesses. Gene Huff describes his second sighting....
>
> Gene Huff: Through the telescope we had seen it was an elliptically shaped light, because you can only get so close even with a telescope to a secure facility. Anyway, it came up by us very rapidly. It glowed, and glowed brighter like a sun. And we almost got the feeling it was going to explode it glowed so bright, and we backed up behind the car. Then it went down, it glowed back up a little bit, and very softly glided back over the mountains where it came up, hovered for a while, then just sat down. Just like you see in the movies.

However, this video program does not depend on Lazar or his friends for its impact; it is a riveting production even without them. It offers many other interesting interviews and a review of the historical evidence supporting a government cover-up. The initial series, plus supplements, is close to two hours long, but there is so much in it that you may be able to absorb it only in fifteen minute doses. The Nov. 1989 series was first broadcast in short segments on the evening news. It was then re-cut into a single 90 minute program. This was supplemented in later months by a follow-up series under the same title (with only a question mark added—*UFOs: The Best Evidence?*), not as earthshaking but worth watching (about 90 minutes more). A further three-part follow-up was broadcast in March 1993 as *Return to Groom Lake*, listed below.

Viewers continue to be frustrated by the difficulty of obtaining *UFOs: The Best Evidence*, George Knapp's landmark series of television reports. At present it is available only in fuzzy, re-recorded form through underground sources. Don't look for a government conspiracy in this. This series contained a lot of copyrighted material—pictures of UFOs, etc.—that could not be legally reproduced. However, Knapp has recently released a new *Best Evidence* series that is available for sale on video tape (and perhaps rental at your local video store). (See Video Tapes above.)

On the Record—Local talk show on KLAS-TV hosted by George Knapp. Lazar was interviewed on one 30 minute program, broadcast Dec. 9, 1989 at 7:00 pm. Very interesting supplement to the original broadcasts. Recommended. (30m)

Current Affair—Segment on Lazar, including a visit to the Little A'Le'Inn. Oct.(?) 1990. Typical sound-bite-length story for those with limited attention spans. (11m)

Sightings: UFO Report—One hour Fox network special, a precursor to the *Sightings* series. Linda Moulton Howe produced a segment featuring Sean Morton and lights seen from the Black Mailbox. This reviewer's opinion: Show-biz fluff; not too convincing. The lights shown as "unidentified" appear to be car headlights on Groom Lake Road. (60m)

Nippon Television (Japan)—Series of one-hour UFO specials featuring extensive coverage of Lazar and Area 51, among other topics. English dubbed versions are available for the programs concerning Lazar. This reviewer's opinion: Godzilla journalism—melodramatic and often silly. Contains a lot of embarrassing shots of the Japanese crew driving places, sitting in office waiting rooms, being introduced to people and driving up to the Medlin's gate, interspersed with hokey special

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effects of flying saucers. A stiff panel of "experts," drawn largely from the entertainment industry, seems less concerned with alien life than with Lazar's unspeakable breach of etiquette in not showing up for his Tokyo interview. (Lazar says he did not go because his life was threatened.) However, there is some good footage in this program of "jumping" aerial lights taken from the vicinity of the Black Mailbox.

The appearance of the not-too-subtle Japanese crew made a lasting impression on the people of Rachel. When the crew stopped residents on the highway to ask about flying saucers, people had trouble keeping a straight face. Some thought it was a prank for *Totally Hidden Video*. Early 1991(?). (90m)

Now It Can Be Told—Geraldo Rivera's now-defunct tabloid program apparently broadcast two stories on Groom Lake and S-4, one in March 1992 (15m) and the other in July 1992 (30m). The latter supposedly included Craig Rivera reporting from the top of White Sides with Groom Lake in the background. This event is said to have thoroughly pissed off the authorities, resulting in several new signs at the border and the blanket policy of calling the Sheriff whenever someone starts up White Sides. [Not yet seen by this reviewer.]

NBC Nightly News aired a brief report (3 min.) on the sonic booms heard and felt in Southern California that are presumed to be caused by Aurora. Broadcast April 20, 1992 and reported by Pentagon correspondent Fred Francis. Included is footage of a "UFO," apparently taken from the vicinity of the Black Mailbox.

> This is exclusive NBC News night vision video of one of those secret flying machines, not Aurora but something that seems to defy the laws of physics. Hundreds of witnesses have seen the bright light hovering motionless over mountains, then move quickly across the night sky at high speeds—like a flying saucer.

What the video shows is a bright orb of light (green through the night vision scope) indeed hovering over the mountains but not making any dramatic moves. It looks to me like "Old Faithful," or the early morning 737 crew flight approaching Groom. While it is nice to have the attention of a national news broadcast, I think they should have stuck with Aurora.

Out and About With Roger Martin—A local "magazine" program on KNBC-TV, Los Angeles A Southern California TV personality follows "World's Foremost UFO Researcher" Sean Morton on a saucer watching expedition. It is winter, and being from Fastasyland, Mr. Martin does not seem prepared for the cold. No saucers photographed, but the crew is stopped by the Deputy Sheriff and sees the mysterious security patrol. This reviewer's opinion: For comic relief only. 1992. (15m)

A brief, sound-bite length segment (less than 5 minutes), appeared on the Fox *Sightings* series in October 1992, suggests that secret test aircraft at Groom Lake are being mistaken for UFOs. This report looks like it was compiled from the outtakes of other stories. Limited information content. 10/16/92. (30m)

Las Angeles Channel 13 news aired a segment on lights seen in the sky near Groom Lake. Broadcast Dec. 1992, about 5 min. This report is a "sound bite soup" of jumbled facts and conjecture with so much thrown in that it is almost meaningless. There are plenty of video clips of ambiguous lights in the sky, with tired "Old Faithful" shots mixed in with a few intriguing ones accompanied by scant explanation. Aviation researcher Steven Aftergood attempts a few words of sanity, but is drowned out by the babbling believers. Whatever is really out there at Area 51, a five minute report like this only make things murkier.

There was a multi-part segment on Groom Lake on the evening news broadcast of Las Vegas Channel 3, just prior to *Return to Groom Lake* on Channel 13. Feb. 1993. (As might be expected, there is a rivalry between the stations to get the story out first.) I have not yet seen the Channel 3 broadcast, but I have read a transcript of it. In addition to the usual review of the saucer and Aurora stories, this broadcast mentions the possible existence of yet another secret base in the Restricted Zone, based on information from ufologist and aviation watcher John Lear.

> Narrator: Sandia... the new Groom Lake... an air base built underground in Piute Mesa, just outside the highly top secret Area 51.

Lear says that Groom Lake has attracted too much attention, so another base has been built underground and has been in operation for at least five years. If you believe Lazar, then you also have to pay attention to Lear. Although he has made some extravagant claims in the past, he also accurately predicted some of Lazar's flying saucer claims by several years. Also discussed in this broadcast is the rumored F-19 Stealth aircraft (which I suspect is the same as the TR-3 or "Black Manta"—a support reconnaissance aircraft used to pinpoint targets for F-117 attacks). An anonymous Lockheed "Skunkworks" worker named "Mike" is quoted.

> Mike: This thing is about the size of an F-16 fighter. Delta wings. The wing tips kind of drooped at the edges. It was a real smooth type fuselage.

Mike also describes his several trips to Area 51.

> Mike: They basically fly you in on a 737. They have you draw the shades so you don't know where you're going or coming out. And while you're out there, you are restricted to your bay or work area for the type of plane you are working on.

Return to Groom Lake—George Knapp recaps what has happened since the original *Best Evidence* broadcasts, this time for Las Vegas television station KTNV-13. Consists of four segments on the local news, broadcast between Mar. 2-5, 1993, about 16 minutes total. As it turns out, not a lot has changed since the broadcasts three years ago. Bob Lazar is alive and well and as disdainful as ever for the UFO enthusiasts who dog him constantly.

The Aurora Project—A story on Groom Lake appeared on the local newscast of WFAA-TV in Dallas sometime in late April 1993. (The crew visited the area on April 20 & 21.) Report consists of two 4-minute segments broadcast on subsequent nights.

The first concerns the Aurora and includes footage of the Groom Base taken from White Sides. The second is a visit to the Little A'Le'Inn. This report is notable because the crew openly took footage of the Groom base from White Sides. When challenged by the Deputy Sheriff, they refused to turn over their tape. Faced with such a high profile violator, the federal authorities declined to prosecute and the WFAA crew walked away with their tape. Moral: You *can* get away with openly photographing the base if you have enough muscle.

Discover Nevada: Rachel, Nevada—A two minute segment on the Little A'Le'Inn was broadcast on the local morning and evening news of Las Vegas Channel 8, KLAS-TV, July 21, 1993. This light, post-Knapp human interest story focuses on the cowboys in the bar, not UFOs or the saucer watchers.

A report on the release of the Testor Model Corporation's plastic model version of Aurora appeared on the local news of many CBS affiliates on Nov. 5, 1993 (including Las Vegas KLAS-TV, Channel 8, on their 11 pm newscast). The model shown has the widely accepted triangular shape, but it differs from the Bill Sweetman design [See Rumored Craft] in the appearance of two externally mounted jet engines on the top rear of the craft. Also shown but not mentioned is Testor's model of the "Mothership" with a smaller craft on top of it.

A similar report on the release of the Testor's Aurora Model (less than 3 minutes) appeared on the CBS Evening News on Nov. 11, 1993.

According to rumors, a report appeared on Las Vegas Channel 3 on the Nov.. 13, 1993, local evening news. Includes a visit to a local hobby shop and an interview with local Rep. Bilbray in which he denies any knowledge of the plane.

Worlds Foremost UFO Researcher Sean Morton reportedly appeared on the *Montel Williams Show* (a nationally syndicated TV talk show) on Dec. 27, 1993 along with a panel of other "experts" to talk about UFOs. Morton discusses Area 51, shows a tape and warns potential visitors that White Sides will be closed Jan. 1, 1994 (one of his usual fabrications). [Thanks to H.F.]

Following are some entries in the Clearing House catalog that I haven't had a chance to follow up on. There are probably many others because more camera crews have come to Rachel than I have programs to account for them. I doubt these missing programs contain anything new, however—just the A'Le'Inn, Black Mailbox and Aurora stories told for a local audience.

Inside Reports—Nevada UFOs. (10m)

Miami Strange Sightings News Special—Ash Springs, Rachel, John Lear. (10m, 4/1/92)

Los Angeles KCOP-TV 3-Part Groom Lake Special. Nov. 28, 1992. (18m)

KTLA News Short—Fisherman see[s] Aurora Re-Fuel in Mid Air. Dec. 1992.

Inside Reports—Bob Lazar, UFO Mechanic. 6/90. (8m)

Home Videos Available from the Clearing House

Historic UFO Conference at Little A'Le'Inn, July 31, 1991. 90 minutes. This reviewer's opinion: An unintentional comedy, heavily conspiracy oriented. Bob Lazar sits quietly in the corner while some very earnest and angry speakers spin sinister theories tying it all together. One talks about hideous "Frankenstein Experiments" conducted on innocent humans by evil aliens in underground bases with the explicit cooperation of the human leadership. What is so funny is not the conspiracy theories themselves—which abound around Area 51 and are perhaps as good as any other explanation—but how supremely confident each speaker seems to be about his contentions. One speaker offers these absolute certainties for 1992:

> We hear from insiders—and this is a fact—that from now and between twelve and eighteen months, they're going to come out with something regarding Area 51 and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. There's no doubt about it. And the reason is that it is being timed to several events that are going to take place next year, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, there's no doubt about the reelection of Mr. Bush. There's no doubt. It's going to happen. Next is, the E.C. is going to be completely united by December 31 of next year. Together with the E.C. union of next year, the reelection of Mr. Bush and the Olympic Games in Spain, [there is going to be] some amazing revelation with disclosure from the government regarding the cover-up.

Such prescience! The conference is followed by a mass expedition to the top of White Sides, which the authorities could not help but know about. Alas, nothing much happens there. (90m)

"Low Helicopter Fly-By at Groom Lake and Tour of Desert Area." I have not seen this home video and know it only by its title and brief clips I saw on other shows that I think came from it. (I think it is the same incident as reported in the *UFO Magazine* article.) Near the border, it is not unusual for helicopters to buzz visitors at very low altitude. (8/2/91, 15m)

Audio Programs

There have been no lack of words expended on the Lazar case; I have chosen to list here only the radio programs where Lazar actually speaks (or where someone reports him speaking, as with the hypnotherapist). There are many other Billy Goodman programs of people other than Lazar talking about flying saucers, at various levels of credibility. Previously, these tapes were available for sale from Roger Beard of Henderson, NV, but he has passed away. At press time, I have no information on where to order these tapes.

⇒Nov. 21, 1989—This program takes place a few days after the original KLAS-TV broadcasts. A wide array of callers draw out a lot of interesting information from Lazar. The only dull segment is a call from conspiracy oriented ufologist Bill Cooper,

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who has no questions to ask but only rambles on about Lazar's heroism and the US Constitution. (One senses that Lazar is stealing some of Cooper's thunder, and Bill is feeling left out.)

Nov. 24, 1989—Featured guest Bill Cooper fails to show due to illness, and Billy Goodman tries to wing it alone. Fortunately, about 15 minutes into the program, Bob Lazar calls up from Rachel and is persuaded to take calls for the rest of the program. (Poor Bill.)

Nov. 30, 1989—Interview with Layne Keck, professional hypnotherapist with no prior UFO interest who interviewed Bob Lazar under hypnosis. [Not heard yet.]

Dec. 20, 1989—Bob Lazar. [Unconfirmed. Not heard yet.]

Dec. 31, 1989—Pre-recorded interviews, including Bob Lazar, Bill Cooper, Virgil Armstrong. [Not heard yet.]

Feb. 2, 1990—John Andrews, Bob Lazar, John Barry, Ron Brown. John Andrews is a model designer for the Testor Corporation who achieved some notoriety for releasing a model of the Stealth fighter before the plane itself was acknowledged by the government. One can only wonder what models will be next. [Not heard yet.]

Other Radio Programs

Dec. 12, 1992—Ufologist John Lear is a guest on the late-night, nationally syndicated Art Bell talk show. Lear's friend Bob Lazar calls in and is persuaded to stay on the line to take calls. Lear has been known for his way-out theories, while Lazar sticks with the facts of what he actually claims to have seen.

Conference Programs

⇒"Ultimate UFO Seminar," held at Little A'Le'Inn, Apr. 30 & May 1, 1993. Available on cassette tape from: Marshall Boshes, 5450 Diller Ave., Culver City, CA 90230. Bob Lazar "reappears" after a long period outside the public eye and answers questions, providing a number of new details about his background and "S-4" experiences. John Lear also speaks, starting out with a generic UFO talk and ending with some interesting information about how he met Bob Lazar and their early saucer watch expeditions. A third speaker, "Captain Eric" is an airline pilot who investigates alleged underground alien bases; his talk seems well-researched, but since it is accompanied by slides, the audio alone may not be too interesting. A fourth speaker, nutcase Gary Schultz, talks *and talks* about a wide variety of conspiracy-oriented topics but does not appear to have any new information to offer on UFOs. (The most interesting parts of the Schultz tapes are the protests against him from the audience, building to all-out insurrection near the end of the conference. Unfortunately, you have to wade through 9 hours of audio to find those good parts.) The number of 90-minute audio tapes and price for each speaker is as follows. Bob Lazar: 2 tapes, $10/set. John Lear: 2 tapes, $10/set. "Captain Eric": 2 tapes, $10/set. Gary Schultz: 6 tapes, $30/set. Add $2 postage for two tapes and 50¢ for each additional tape. You can also write to Marshall for a list of other audio programs on UFOs and related topics.

Transcript. A transcript of Lazar's talk at the conference is available for $8 plus $2 postage from: Area 51 Research Center, PO Box 448, Rachel, NV 89001. The document is 27 pages in dense type and includes footnotes, an index and results of MIT inquiries.

Other Transcripts. After speaking at the podium, Lazar was bombarded by still more questions at the bar of the Little A'Le'Inn. A transcript of some of these exchanges appears in the Oct. 1993 issue of *MUFON UFO Journal*.

Addendum: References Since Oct. 1993

Items below have accumulated since the Air Force land withdrawal was applied for. There are too many for individual comment. Listed in reverse chronological order. The list here ends about Jan. 1995. They go on and on, usually with with no major revelations, just a small bit of information added in each. See the Area 51 page on the internet for an updated list.

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4/15, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Equipment, Videotape Returned to New Crew."

4/14, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Equipment Seized Near Secret Base."

4/13, Dayton Daily News/Cox News Service: "ABC News Gear Confiscated at Base." (Reprinted in L.V. Sun and other papers.)

4/1, Aerotech News and Review: "Dreamland - The Air Force's Remote Test Site."

3/4, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Land Request Boosts Saucer Heads' Curiosity of Area 51." Column.

3/3, Las Vegas Sun: "Citizens, AF Stir Waters at Groom Lake." 3/3, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Air Force plan for land near base debated." Las Vegas hearing.

3/24, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Groom Probe Finds No Toxic Burning." State investigation stymied.

3/20, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Groom Lake Toxic Burning Alleged." Anonymous source provides details. Incl. base map and sidebar on "extravagant living."

3/20, Dayton Daily News: 2-page spread on Groom. [Reprinted in other newspapers, including the Austin American Statesman on 4/3.] "Top Secret." Lead article "The Intrepid Sneak Close To Peek." "One Man Takes On Secret Base." Campbell. "'Earthlings Always Welcome' At Bar, Grill."

3/2, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Air Force 'Buffer Zone'." Editorial on land grab.

3/2, Boston Globe: "My Date with an Alien". Campbell.

3/10, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Lawsuit Planned Against Secret Base." Hazardous waste claims.

3/1, WSDC: "Illegal Road Sensors on Public Land." Map.

3/94, Inforespace (Belgian UFO magazine): "Area 51." by Andre Canizares. A visit to Freedom Ridge--in French!

3/94, Popular Science: "Searching for the Secrets of Groom Lake." Cover story. See DR#4. Copies are $4 plus $2 postage: complete issue.

2/94, Sunday People (U.K.): Article on Little A'Le'Inn.

2/94, MUFON UFO Journal: "Lazar as a Fictional Character." By Campbell.

2/94, Monitoring Times: "Out Foxing the Foxes." How to find road sensors.

2/4, Aerotech News and Review: "Secret AF Base Center Of Controversy."

2/24, Lincoln County Record: "Natl. Magazine 'Spies' on Groom Lake." Popular Science.

2/23, Las Vegas Sun: "AF Takes Blame For Boom."

2/23, Las Vegas Review-Journal: Story on Booms.

2/22, WSDC: "How to Evade Engle Act at Groom Lake, Nevada."

2/22, Nellis AFB: Press release on mysterious booms heard in Las Vegas.

2/1, Las Vegas Review-Journal: Editorial cartoon on AF land needs. Reno Articles.

1/2, Washington Post: "The Pentagon's Secret Garden." [by Sweetman]

1/3, Aviation Week: Letter by John Andrews protesting land grab.

1/5, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Seven people arrested in Groom Lake incident." [Trespassers]

1/29, Las Vegas Review-Journal: Editorial re: Lazar and Knapp [dismissive].

1/30, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Air Force buffer zone for Groom Lake base to be discussed." [Hearings]

2/94: Wired Magazine: "A Visit to Dreamland." [2-page photo of Groom base]

Print References 1993...

12/28, Wall Street Journal: "'Earthlings Welcome' in tiny NV town where mysterious aircraft often fly overhead."

12/27, High Country News: "How military secrecy zones out Nevada." [Oct. camp-out]

12/7, Las Vegas Review-Journal: Editorial cartoon. [Prospector chased by security goons.]

12/5, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Budget for hypersonic spy plane rivals Nevada Test Site."

12/5, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "'Spy' turns focus on buffer area." [Campbell]

12/93, Jornal fur UFO-Forschung: Review of Campbell's Area 51 Viewer's Guide (in German).

12/93, Intercepts Newsletter: "Dispatches from the front." [Road sensors found on public land]

11/6, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "State seeks evidence of burn pits" [at Groom base].

11/1, Testor Corp.: Announcement to dealers of June 94 release of Lazar saucer model.

11/1, Aviation Week: "No more peeks." [one paragraph] 11/1, Newsweek: "The Mystery at Groom Lake."

10/29, Inside the Air Force: "USAF seeks to keep unwanted eyes from watching secret Nevada base."

10/25, Defense Week: "Air Force land grab eclipses view of 'UFOs'."

10/23, Scripps Howard Service: "Mountain 'spying' upsets AF at secret Nevada base."

10/23, Las Vegas Review-Journal: "Air Force promises openness" [in open-pit burning case].

10/21, Aerospace Daily: "Air Force tries to plug 37-year-old leak with Groom Lake Land Grab."

10/19: Las Vegas Review-Journal: "State to examine Stealth base for toxic fumes." [Hazardous waste dump at Groom base.] 10/18: Federal Register: "Notice of proposed withdrawal and opportunity for public meeting."

10/17: Salt Lake Tribune: "No peeking from peak: Air force wants to seize mountain to protect secret base."

9/93: Intl. Defense Review: "Groom Lake's secret revealed?" Mothership theories, by Bill Sweetman.]

5/93: On-Site Inspection Agency: Fact Sheet on Open Skies Treaty (which allows foreign overflights of Groom Lake). For a copy, call On-Site Inspection Agency, (703)742-4326.

11/25/88, Las Vegas Review-Journal (Nevadan Today supplement): "John Lear hangs neck out to say UFOs are real." By Kerrie Robinson.

Television Broadcasts 1994

Below are TV broadcasts on Groom Lake. Most are brief news reports of 3-5 minutes. Some reports by local TV stations were rerun by affiliates in other cities. 1994

11/25, CBS Evening News: Report on Groom Suit.

11/?, Sixty Minutes: Report on Ben Rich, former chairman of Lockheed Skunkworks, with passing mention of Groom.

11/6 &'11/7, WBBM-TV (Chicago), report on Groom on evening news. 10pm.

11/10, KLAS-TV & KNTV-TV (Las Vegas), Reports on pretrial hearing on Groom hazardous waste case.

10/1, TNT Cable Network: Larry King UFO Special. Two hours, live from Rachel, Nevada.

9/19, Montel Williams Show.

9/16 9/11, The Crusaders: Segment on UFOs with visit to F.R. Tapes ($29.95) and transcripts ($6) available by calling 800-777-TEXT. 9/10, Crusaders 8/28, KLAS-TV (Las Vegas): Report on F.R. campout. Lightweight.

8/1, KNBC, Los Angeles Ch. 4: Report on Groom Lake.

7/4, ARD TV (Germany): Report on Groom Lake.

7/22, Encounters.

5/?, Tue & Weds, Salt Lake City, [rebroadcast on L.A. KNBC on 6/7.]

5/?, Fresno Channel 30: Report on Groom Lake UFO outing. 5/27, WFAA Dallas: Update report on Groom Lake and TTR.

4/20, 48 Hours (CBS): "Are We Alone?" Show on UFOs. (No mention of Groom, but Dr. Steven Greer, later a guest on 10/1 Larry King Special, is profiled). [Transcript available from Burrelle's Transcripts, 800-777-8398.]

4/19, ABC World News Tonight: Report on Groom Lake. (Transcript available.)

3/3/94, CNN: Report on land grab hearing and Freedom Ridge visit (3 min.). A 5 min. version appeared on CNN's "Science & Technology Week" on 3/5.

3/1-3, Las Vegas KLAS 8: F.R. Visit, land grab hearing.

3/94, Los Angeles Fox 10: Report on Aurora. Nuttin new.

2/94, San Diego Ch. 10: Visit to Rachel. Shallow.

2/94, Fox Network: Encounters: UFO Report, Hour special with segment on Groom. Slick, no real info.

2/94, Boston WLVI 56: 3-part Rachel/F.R. visit. Numerous reruns of Fox America's Defense Monitor ?, ABC Evening News.

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Express Guide to Las Vegas

To me, UFOs and Las Vegas go together naturally, and it's hard to do one without the other. Apart from being the logical staging area for expeditions to the Black Mailbox, Las Vegas also offers many sobering lessons concerning the fallibility of human perception. The casino business is a highly efficient machine for relieving people of their money without giving them anything in return. Everyone knows that the odds favor the house, yet people still flock here. Each patron jumps to a conclusion that the evidence does not support: that their case is special and they will "beat the odds" this time.

How to Win in Las Vegas. On the other hand, I know a way you can win in Las Vegas. You see, I have a "system," and because you and I are close, I'm going to let you in on it. The system works like this: Come to Las Vegas at mid-week; stay at the casino hotels and eat at their buffets, but don't gamble. Then, you can get an incredible value for your money, and the casinos will lose. The gambling operations usually subsidize food and lodging on the assumption that customers passing through the casino will be tempted to try their luck. There is not the slightest coercion to gamble, only the fact that you have to walk past the slot machines to register and eat. Casinos are usually laid out like rat mazes, and you may have to run a gauntlet of flashing lights to find the registration desk or buffet. I see this as an interesting challenge, like following a formal garden maze in England, but the puzzle isn't much fun if you are tired or in a hurry. To make getting in and out of Las Vegas as painless as possible, I have recommended a limited number of easily accessible enterprises below.

Lodging

Finding an inexpensive room in Las Vegas is a "feast or famine" undertaking: Depending on the traffic, rooms are either cheap and available everywhere, or expensive and available only at a few seedy motels. Some casinos, especially the most popular ones, try to maintain relatively constant room rates regardless of traffic; the rates of others can change dramatically from day to day according to demand. Mid-week rates at many hotels often hover around $25 per room, but on weekends the rates can double, even triple, due to the huge influx of visitors from Southern California.

If you must stay in Las Vegas on a peak day, it is important to have a reservation before you arrive, while on off-peak days reservations are senseless since a credit card "guarantee" is usually required and this reduces your freedom to change. Friday and Saturday nights are usually peak nights, with lower rates the rest of the week, but this pattern can change if a big convention is in town or if a weekend is particularly slow. To find out whether a specific night is peak or off-peak, call the reservations number of a price sensitive hotel, like *Vacation Village*, and ask for the room rate for the day you plan to arrive. If the rate is low (about $25), then this usually implies that there are plenty of rooms available and you don't need to make a reservation. If the rates are higher, then you do need to make a reservation, but probably not at the hotel you called; it is likely to be too expensive.

Recommendations. For travelers just passing through Las Vegas, the main casino areas—the Strip and Downtown—can be a jungle of traffic and confusion. To avoid all the hassle, I recommend staying on the outskirts of the city and approaching the tourist areas only as a day trip. On weekdays, my favorite hotel for convenience and price is ***Vacation Village*** near I-15 near the southern limits of the city. Off-peak rates usually run $20 to $25 per room, although the weekend rate could be $45 to $65 or more. Phone (800) 658-5000. From I-15, take Exit 35/Russell Road (just south of the Luxor Pyramid) and turn right on Las Vegas Blvd. (away from the city). Hotel is about a mile down on the right.

If you must stay in Vegas on a weekend, or if you happen to be coming from California any day, I recommend avoiding the hassles of the city and staying about 30 minutes south of Las Vegas at one of the big middle-of-nowhere hotels on the freeway near the California border. The price is predictable and always the lowest in the area: under $20 on weekdays and under $35 on Fridays, Saturdays and holidays. The best is ***Prima Donna*** (Exit 1, (800) 367-7383), a replica of the seaside Coronado Hotel in San Diego. Lots of attractions nearby. Closer to the city is ***Nevada Landing*** (Exit 12, (800) 628-6682), tastefully gaudy in its massive riverboat facade. If you are arriving via Arizona and Hoover Dam, try the ***Gold Strike Inn*** on the main road three miles north of Hoover Dam (800-245-6380, similar low rates, but reservations essential).

Food

All-you-can eat buffets are a Las Vegas trademark. The price advertised, like $3.95 for lunch, is exactly

what you pay, including drink and dessert. This is a genuine bargain, but only if you are hungry enough to eat more than $3.95 worth of food. If you want to win big at this game, I suggest fasting for 24 hours so you can thoroughly stuff yourself in one sitting. In the interests of science, I have eaten at 99% of the casino buffets in Las Vegas, a feat that I think belongs in Guinness. (100% is nearly impossible due to new buffets opening and undiscovered ones that don't advertise.) My top buffet choices are listed below. Especially useful to casual visitors are several immediately off the freeway. You can get in and out of these quickly without messing with traffic.

Meal hours vary by location, but are generally 7-10 for breakfast, 11-3 for lunch and 4-9 for dinner. At busy times, especially weekends, it is a good idea to get to a buffet just as it opens to avoid long lines. At most buffets, I usually leave a tip of 50¢ for the server, even though he/she only serves the drink. For the sake of your health and intestinal comfort, do not attempt more than one buffet a day. Lunch is usually a better deal than dinner, since the price is lower and most of the same items are offered at both meals. (The *Frontier* is better at dinner, however.) Breakfast is usually of the full-cholesterol eggs-and-pork-products variety and can be skipped. Most casinos have a "Brunch" on weekends (or just Sunday), occupying both the breakfast and lunch time slot. (*Arizona Charlie's* and the *Frontier* are exceptions, offering regular meals.) Brunch offers a combination of breakfast and lunch items, but fewer of each, and at a higher price. It's just an excuse to charge more—skip it.

The best of the freeway-adjacent buffets are ***Palace Station***, at Sahara West (Exit 40) and ***Rio Hotel*** at Flamingo (Exit 38). Easy-off, easy-on from the freeway. Prices at both are about $3.95 breakfast, $5.95 lunch, $7.95 dinner. The Rio is a veritable buffet *shopping mall*, with many little kiosks serving different cuisine. If you visit only one buffet in Vegas, the Rio should be it (although if the lines are too long, you can blow it off and go to Palace Station instead). Cheaper eats on the freeway can be found at ***Gold Coast*** (Exit 38) or any of the freeway casinos at the California border.

If you choose to venture beyond the freeway, there are countless buffets to choose from in the Strip and Downtown hotels, but the value usually does not measure up to the freeway buffets just mentioned. One exception is the ***Frontier Hotel***, my favorite buffet on the Strip, at $5.95 dinner ($7.95 on Friday), drink 95¢ extra. (Located on the Strip between Spring Mountain and Desert Inn roads. Buffet is in Michelle's Village Cafe.) The decor is interesting and everything seems done just right. Lunch at the *Frontier* is less exciting but is still recommended for ambiance and price, $2.95, drink 95¢ extra, 11-2, 7 days. Unfortunately, the lines at the Frontier are usually long at dinner, and it may not be worth the wait. Another excellent buffet, with less waiting, is at the ***Luxor***($4.49/$5.49/$7.49). The "cityscape" setting at the Luxor is impressive.

Several miles west of the freeway, ***Arizona Charlie's*** is my usual choice for a cheap, quick, good quality meal. It's the closest to grocery and department stores and lines are usually short. $2.80 breakfast, $3.27 lunch, $4.67 dinner, 7 days. (Located on Decatur near Alta. Take the US-95 freeway west from I-15, exit at Decatur Blvd. and go two blocks south.)

On US-95 to Arizona, the best buffet is ***Boulder Station*** ($3.95/$5.95/$7.95). Easy freeway access.

In this reviewer's opinion, none of the buffets in downtown Las Vegas are worth the effort. If you happen to be stuck there at meal time, ***Lady Luck*** ($2.99/$3.99/$6.99) and Fitzgeralds ($3.99/$4.49/$5.99) offer cheap eats, while ***Golden Nugget*** offers better quality with an excessive price ($4.75/$7.50/$9.50).

Entertainment

Finding things to do in Las Vegas becomes a challenge by the second day in town. On the first day, you can tour each of the big theme casinos—*Treasure Island, Luxor, Caesar's Palace, Mirage, Excalibur* and whatever else is new on the Strip. Here's a capsule review of each for adult non-gamblers...

Visit these....

Luxor—Full size Egyptian pyramid with a city inside. Definitely worth a visit. Attractions are worthwhile. "Episode #1" is the best, offering a simulator ride through an underground world and a plot that is amusingly familiar to Area 51 fans. "Episode #3," a big-screen movie, is also worth the time. Skip "Episode #2" and the boat ride. Superior buffet.

Caesar's Palace—The Forum, a spectacular indoor shopping street hidden in the back of the casino, shouldn't be missed.

Mirage—Classy joint. Indoor "rain forest," hourly pyrotechnic volcano outside, tigers. Worth a pass-through.

Treasure Island—Pyrotechnic pirate battle out front every 90 minutes—must see—but don't bother going inside.

Tropicana—No attractions here, but you can view the "Janet" airline terminal (employee flights to Groom Lake) from the 21st floor of Island Tower.

The Stateline complex (I-15 Exit 1) of **Whiskey Pete's, Primadonna,** and **Buffalo Bills** is a must stop for California motorists. Lots of free or nearly-free attractions: Ferris wheel, merry-go-round and 5¢ arcade at Primadonna. Bonnie-

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and-Clyde death car and other gangster cars at Whiskey Pete's. Feel monorail over the freeway. At Buffalo Bill's, the world's highest roller coast ($4) is truly sickening. On weekdays at all three hotels, $20 or less gets you a room, 2 roller coaster tickets and 2 breakfast buffets. ($40 or less on weekends.) Instead of hunting for a room in Vegas, it is usually a good bet to come here for the night (30 minute drive). Primadonna is the best for lodging (800-367-7383).

Adults should avoid these....

Circus-Circus—Free circus acts every 30 minutes. Not worth the effort; it's a rat maze inside.

Excalibur—King Arthur motif. For the masses. Skip it.

Grand Slam Canyon—A small indoor amusement park behind Circus-Circus. An architectural marvel, but the rides are routine. Admission $3, including one ride. Other rides are $1.50-$2.50 each. No loss if skipped.

MGM Grand—Biggest hotel in the world with a theme park out back. Considering the amount of money spent, the place shows a remarkable lack of imagination. Theme park is a tepid imitation of Disney. Skip it.

Any casino not mentioned above is only a glitzy facade and can be skipped. Each of the above can be satisfactorily covered in an hour or less, and once you've seen it, there's rarely any reason to go back. These places are amazing displays of architecture and showmanship, but the amusement does not last beyond the initial exploration.

After taking the free tour of gambling palaces and the requisite nighttime drive through the neon, you have seen most of what Vegas has to offer. Further entertainment will probably involve leaving the city or seeking out a few small and hidden museums. The ***Nevada State Museum*** is recommended if you have the time. (Admission $2. Open 9-5 daily. Take the Valley View exit on the US-95 freeway west of I-15, go north, turn right on Washington then right on Twin Lakes Dr.)

If you would like an excuse to intrude into Nellis Air Force Base, the ***Thunderbird Museum*** is open for free public tour on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 pm. Inside the gates, Nellis resembles a college campus, with pleasantly manicured greenery and only a few hints of traditional military gray. The museum itself is a temple to the Thunderbird aerobatic team. Bo-ring! During the winter, spring and fall, the tour usually includes a visit to the adjoining hanger to see the Thunderbird F-16s up close. Getting into Nellis requires no clearances from MJ-12; you simply report to the Visitors Center at the Nellis main gate at about 1:45 on Tuesday or Thursday and tell the guard where you want to go. (Museum phone: (702) 652-4018.)

If you can plan ahead, a highly recommended tour is the free Department of Energy bus tour of the ***Nevada Test Site***. The tour takes all day and covers the major portion of the Test Site, including numerous craters and many of the bridges, houses and other structures they built only to blow up. Above the main entrance gate, a sign reads: "Welcome to the Nevada Test Site—An Environmental Research Park." Aside from the delicious black comedy of the place, the tour comes almost to the back door of Area 51. The public tour is conducted only about once a month, so you would have to plan your visit around it. Reservations are required: Call Brenda at the DOE Public Affairs at (702) 295-0944. Expect to give them your social security number and other identifying data, but they probably won't run a background check. Cameras, binoculars and tape recorders are not allowed on the tour. Don't bother bringing a lunch, because sandwiches, snacks and drinks are available from vending machines in Mercury for very low, government-subsidized prices.

Hoover Dam is worth the journey, about an hour south. Tours of the inner workings are $2. ***Valley of Fire State Park***, about an hour northeast, is more interesting than ***Red Rock Canyon***, about a half hour west, but both can be skipped by visitors without a lot of time.

Shopping

On a casual encounter with Las Vegas, grocery and department stores may seem entirely absent. There are none in the vicinity of I-15 or the Strip, this real estate being monopolized by the casinos. There is *mucho* shopping a few miles inland, however. Grocery stores and a 24 hour Wal-Mart can be found on Tropicana about three miles east of the freeway (Exit 37). Grocery stores can also be found a few miles west of I-15 on Sahara (Exit 40). You can also take just about any exit off the US-95 freeway to find grocery and department stores: The Decatur or Rainbow exits are good choices. (Take US-95 west from I-15.)

Last Gas/Cash. If you are heading north to the Black Mailbox, the last gas in Las Vegas is at the Craig Road exit on I-15 (Exit 48). The price here is as low as can be found in Las Vegas. This is also the site of the Last Cash Machine before the Black Mailbox (at the Seven-Eleven about a quarter mile east of the exit).

Cammo Outfits. If you'd like to get yourself a desert camouflage outfit identical to the ones the Cammo Dudes wear, you can stop at *Army-Navy 1* on Rainbow between Oakey and Charleston. I bought my own complete cammo outfit—Oh so chic!—for about $80. At the same time, you can pick up some military "MRE" meals, the food-in-a-packet long scorned by GIs but now much improved. Like candlelight and a fine French wine, they lend the appropriate romance to any camping experience.

Aircraft Viewing

For fanatics, Nellis Air Force Base is paradise for plane watching. Owing to the continual influx of visiting squadrons, the density and variety of military air activity here is perhaps the best in the world. There is a lot more activity here on weekdays than on weekends. In addition to the take-offs and landings of visiting fighters jocks, the Thunderbirds practice their stunts here almost every day in the winter. Listed below are several good viewing spots. Since there aren't any "No Photography" signs here, you can presumably snap away as much as you like.

Las Vegas Blvd. North. To get to this Nellis AFB viewpoint, you can follow the Strip all the way from the casinos (a long trip), or take the Craig Rd. exit on I-15 and follow Craig to Las Vegas Blvd. On the Blvd., keep driving past the Nellis main gate, past the gas tanks on the left and look for "Nellis Air Force" spelled out in rocks on a hillside right. Just beyond this, there is a wide dirt area immediately beside the road where you can park and watch air activity through the fence. Better yet, you can take a dirt road to get directly under the runway approach. Keep going on Las Vegas Blvd. until the fence turns east, then look for a lone telephone pole on the right side of the road. Turn right on the dirt road beside the pole (suitable for any vehicle) and go about a half mile until the fence makes another turn. At the corner of the fence you are directly under the approach zone, where jets roar overhead almost close enough to touch.

From this location, the distant facility to the east is "Area 2," a weapons storage facility that is rumored to contain a stockpile of nuclear weapons.

North end of Hollywood Blvd. Hollywood Blvd. runs along foothills east of the city. You can get to it by taking Lake Mead Blvd. east from I-15 (about 10 miles). Turn left on Hollywood Blvd. and keep driving until you encounter "No Trespassing" signs. If you park outside the signs, you can watch bombs being loaded at a nearby munitions facility. There is also a network of rugged dirt roads outside the line that you can explore if you have a 4WD.

Sunrise Summit on Lake Mead Blvd. If you keep going east on Lake Mead Blvd. past Hollywood Blvd., you'll come to a high point where you have a magnificent high angle view of Nellis AFB and all the rest of Las Vegas.

Mount Charleston and Angel Peak

Mt. Charleston State Park is a popular outing location about 45 minutes northwest of Las Vegas. In addition to offering real trees, hiking, camping and attractive scenery, the park offers some excellent viewpoints for the Restricted Zone and all of Southern Nevada. The best road-accessible viewpoint is Angel Peak, off SR-158. This mountain is festooned with radar and communications antennas, so a paved access road leads all the way to the top. From here, you have a spectacular view to the north. On most days, you can easily see Bald Mtn. in the Groom Range almost directly north. You also have a complete view of the airspace over Papoose and Groom Lakes, although, at a distance of about 60-80 miles, you would probably need a powerful telescope to see anything moving.

To reach Angel Peak from Las Vegas: Take US-95 north to SR-157 to SR-158. The road to Angel Peak is unmarked but is the same one as for Spring Mountain Youth Camp at Mile CL 4.5 on SR-158. Road is paved but steep. When you reach a fork just before the Youth Camp, keep left and proceed past the barracks. The road leads all the way to a radar dome at the top of Angel Peak, about 3.2 miles from SR-158. This is a manned facility, however, and the occupants may not like you being there. For a more comfortable view, turn right on a side road 2.8 miles from SR-158. This leads to a Centel microwave facility that overlooks the valley below. At an elevation of close to 9000 feet, expect cold temperatures year round.

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Address for Corrections

I welcome all comments and corrections that might help improve this document. While I have tried my best to get the facts straight, I realize that I will always have a lot to learn. I welcome minor corrections as much as major ones and am eager for advice from anyone who cares to give it. I do not have a proofreader and am constantly at war with typos, so if you find any, place send me a list.

I'd also like to hear about your UFO and secret aircraft sightings. Try to be as specific as you can about what you saw, where you were when you saw it, in what direction, etc. If you send me these by email, I can post them to our World Wide Web page[82] (with your permission.) It is more important to describe *what you saw* from your viewpoint than trying to interpret what it was. "I saw a 500 foot space ship travel 10,000 miles an hour," is not as useful as, "I saw a steady blue-white light 5 times brighter than Venus traverse 30 arc degrees in about 3 seconds." If appropriate, I will add this information to the Flying Object Identifier or to a new document. Like everyone else, I want to hear about the truly bizarre objects that seem to defy the laws of physics, but I am also interested in the merely spectacular operations of earthly craft if these might be interpreted as UFOs by saucer-minded visitors. One of our goals should be to collect enough information about "red herring" objects that we can recognize something truly remarkable when it happens.

Be forewarned, however, that apart from posting them to the internet I don't know what to *do* with UFO sighting reports any more than anyone else does. Seeing an unusual light in the sky—no matter how dramatic or unearthly—doesn't necessarily lead us to any useful leads. About all I can do in most cases is say, "Hmmm, that's interesting," and file the report for future reference.

Finally, I'd like to hear about any usual encounters with security personnel, be they ominous or benign. This is something I do know what to do with. If ominous, please provide as many details as possible concerning time, place, vehicle registration numbers (if possible) and descriptions of personnel. This information, once compiled, might help tell watchers what to expect and also help discourage such incidents in the future. On the other hand, I also welcome comments from military officials, security personnel or local law enforcement. If they have any safety warnings or comments on legalities, I would be happy to include these in the document as well. It is the advice of this *Viewer's Guide* that watchers should stay entirely within the law, and any information that might help them understand the law would certainly be helpful.

I will endeavor to respect any contributor's wishes regarding confidentiality. Normally, I will not mention any contributor's name in this document, unless they have already gone on the public record with that information or have indicated to me that it is okay to use their name.[83] (Where credit seems appropriate, I usually use only a person's initials.) While I may accept anonymous advice from shadowy figures in dimly lit parking garages, I am not seeking classified information. Instead, I prefer to work with public and confirmable sources which, by a series of logical connections, might force inappropriately classified information out into the open.

Send comments to:

Glenn Campbell
PO Box 448
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Or email:

psychospy@aol.com

[82] See http address on Page 2.

[83] In keeping with accepted journalistic practices, certain exceptions do apply, as when a person is acting in an official capacity or is performing the role of public spokesman.

Ordering Information

To order additional copies of the *Area 51 Viewer's Guide*, send $15 per copy, plus $3.50 priority mail postage and handling (USA/Canada/Mexico). [For overseas orders, airmail postage is $10.] Nevada residents must also add your local sales tax.

Make check payable to "Area 51 Research Center" and send order to:

Area 51 Research Center
PO Box 448
Rachel, NV 89001

Checks (drawn on a US bank) or postal money orders are preferred, but cash is accepted at sender's risk.

Dealer inquiries are invited.

Missing Pages

If any pages happen to be missing or unreadable in your copy of the *Viewer's Guide*, send me a note, at the above address, and I will replace them. Specify page numbers and edition number.

Newsletter

To keep people informed of fast breaking news regarding Area 51, *The Groom Lake Desert Rat* was inaugurated in Jan. 1994. This newsletter will be issued at irregular intervals whenever conditions warrant. (Currently issued about once a month.) Two forms of the newsletter are available. Internet users may subscribe to an email version free of charge. Just send a message to psychospy@aol.com. A hardcopy version is also available at a cost of $1.50 per issue, mailed anywhere in the world. (e.g. $15 for the next 10 issues.) Order from the address above. Back issues are available.

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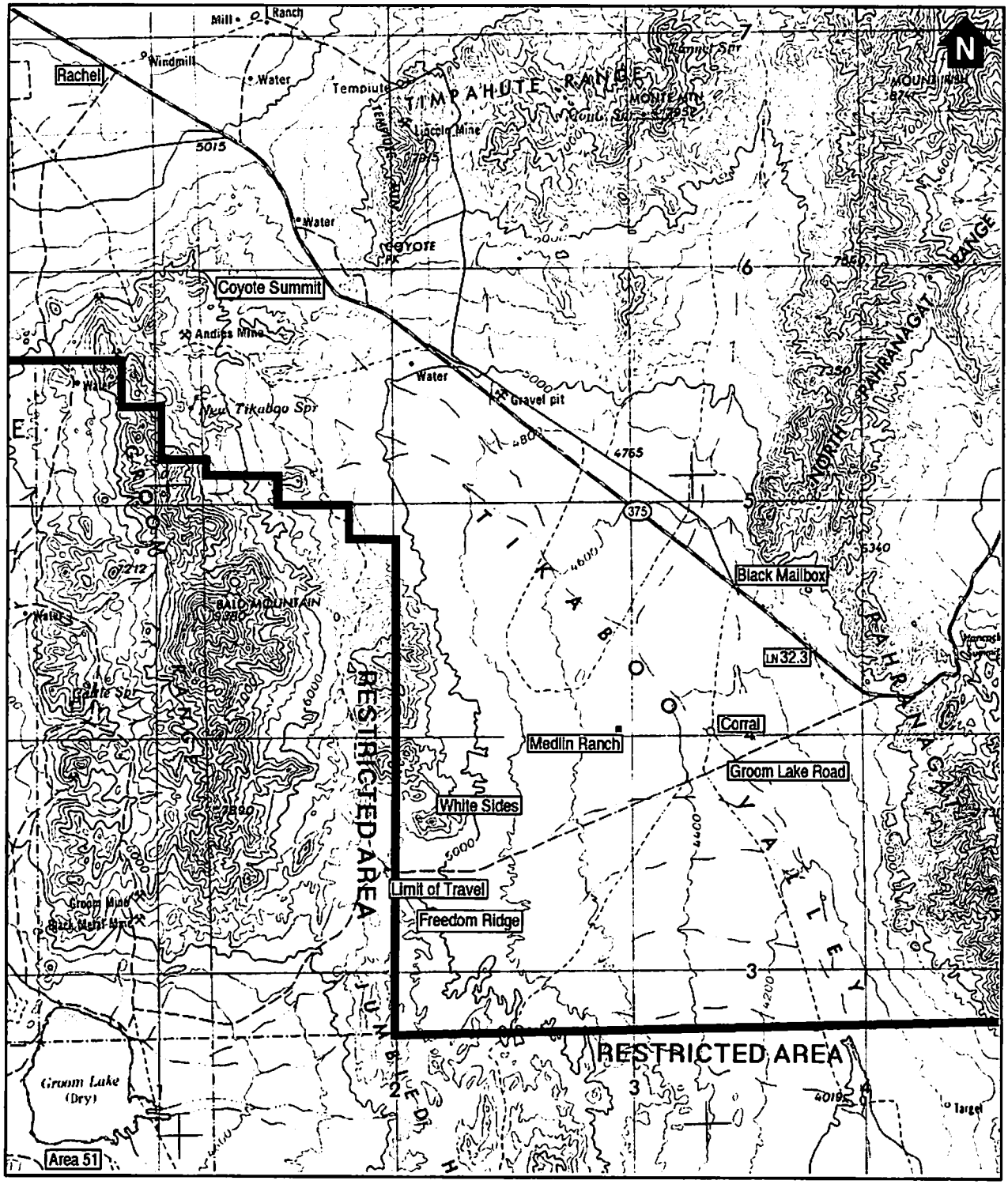
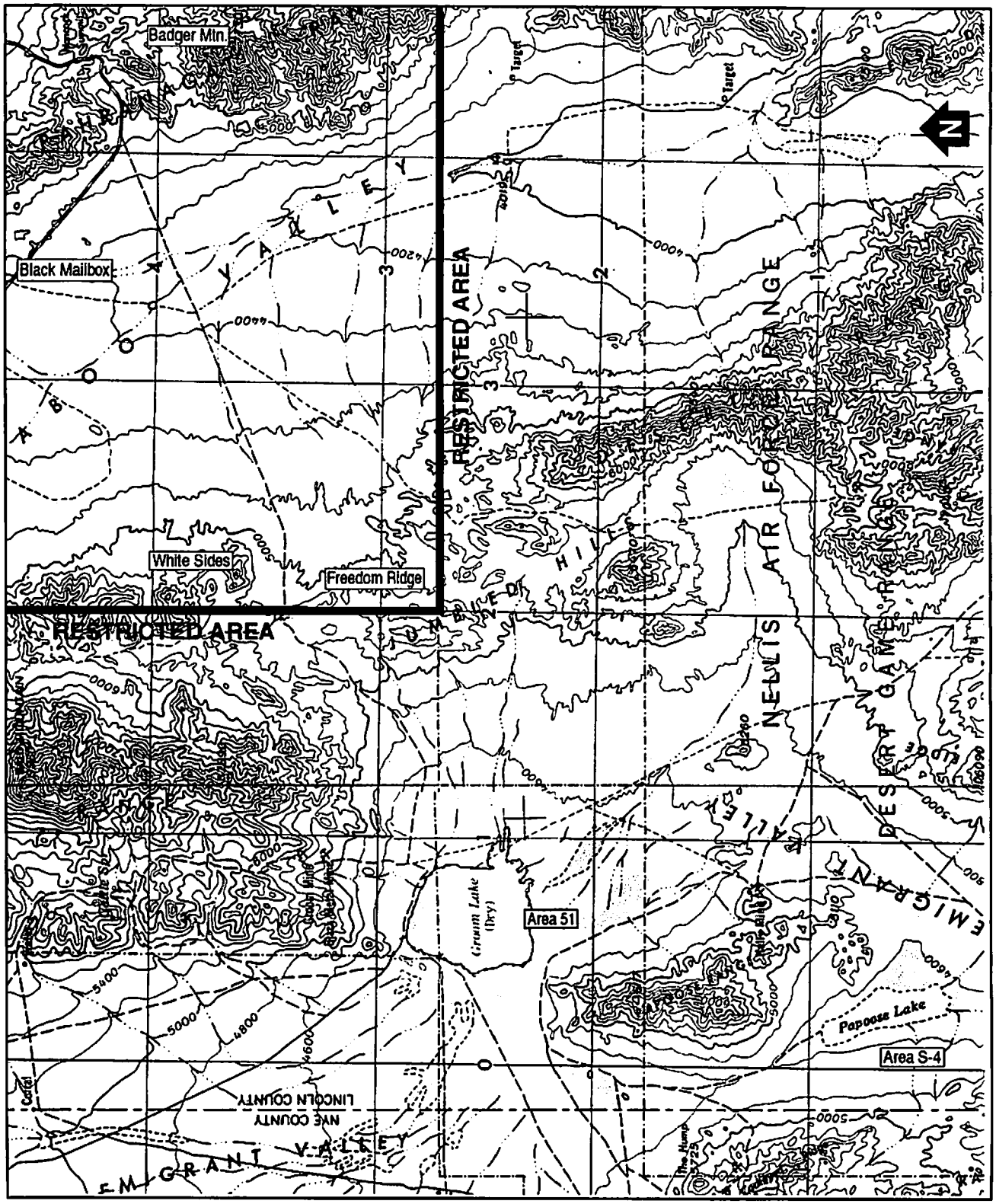
Map Portfolio

Tikaboo Valley, Groom Lake and Rachel



Scale 1:250,000 (1 inch = 4 miles). Base map: Caliente USGS, 1954. ***Warning: Border shown is the old one, before Freedom Ridge and White Sides were seized.***

Groom Lake, Papoose Lake and Vantage Points



North is left. Scale 1:250,000 (1 inch = 4 miles). Base map: Caliente USGS, 1954. ***Warning: Border shown is the old one, before Freedom Ridge and White Sides were seized.***

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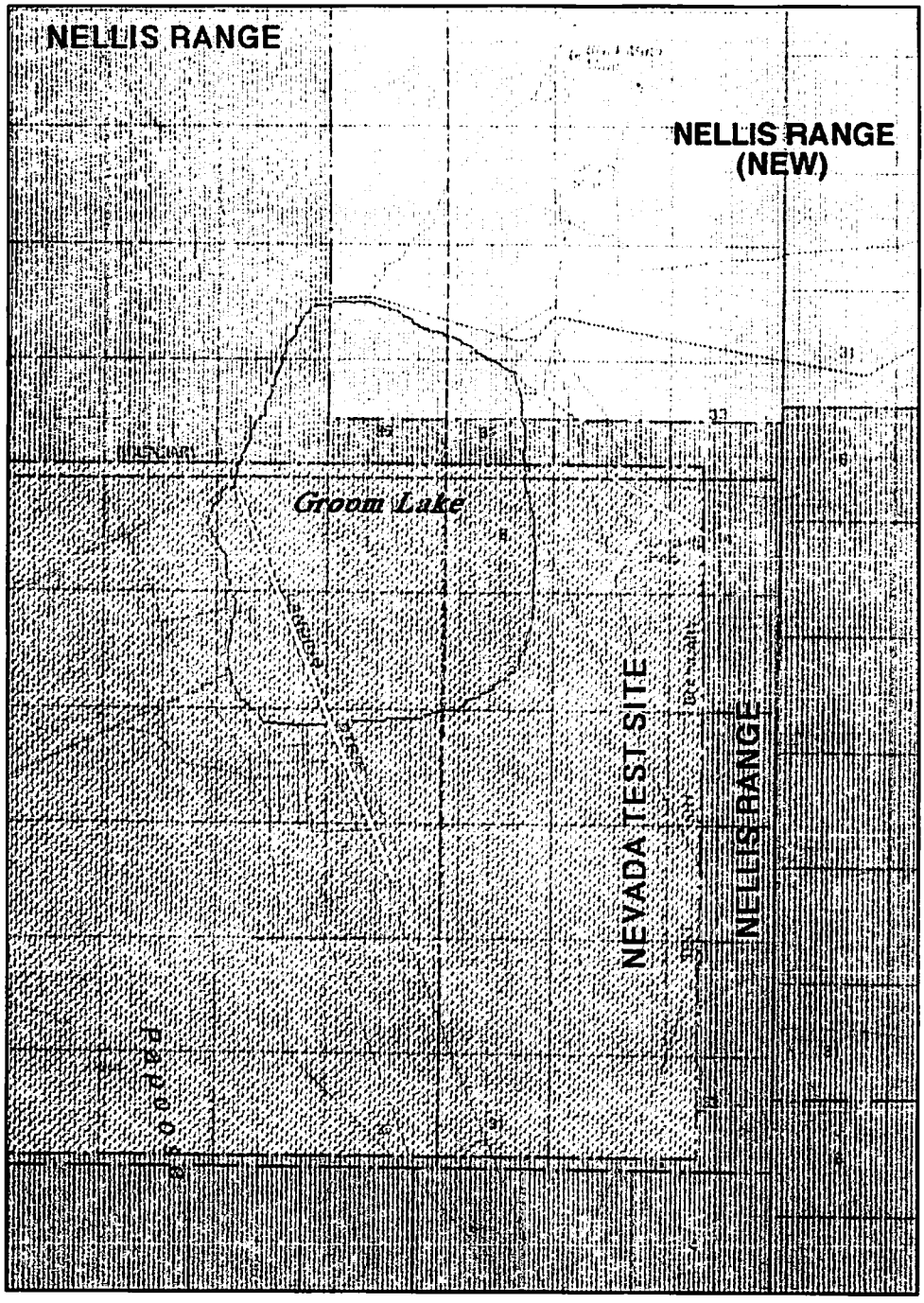
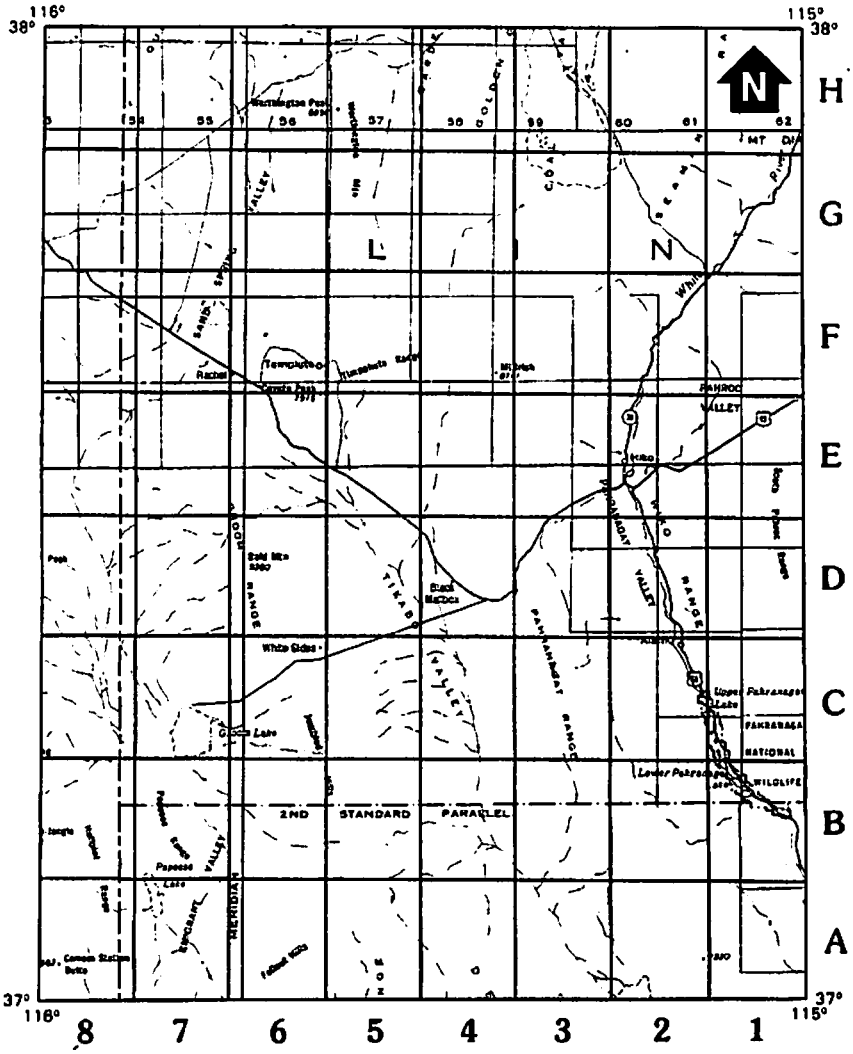
Groom Lake Airstrips

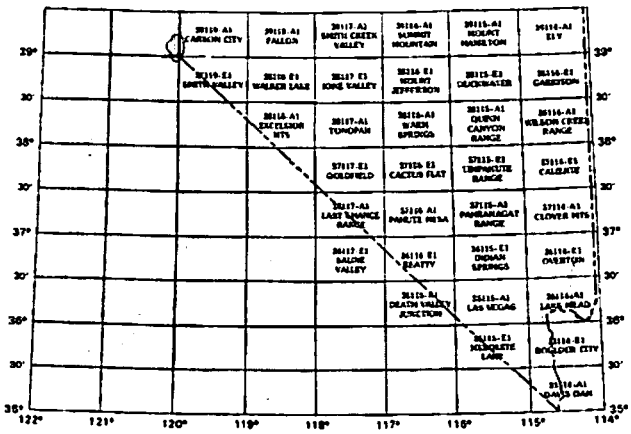


Groom Lake airstrips and roads as shown (faintly) on a 1978 USGS Surface Management map (Pahranagat Range). This conforms roughly with the current view from White Sides. Scale 1:100,000 (1 inch = 1.6 miles). The gray block in the center, encompassing the southern half of Groom Lake and the long airstrip, is assumed to be "Area 51." Since this map was published, the air strip is said to have been extended by 10,000 feet, making it among the longest in the world.

Index to USGS 7-1/2 Minute Maps of Tikaboo Valley and Vicinity



USGS 1:100,000 Maps of S. Nevada



Maps covering SR-375 are highlighted.

A1		Lower Pahranagat Lake SE
A2		Lower Pahranagat Lake SW
A3	oq	Desert Hills SE
A4	oq	Desert Hills SW
A5	oq	Southeastern Mine
A6	oq	Fallout Hills
A7		Papoose Lake
A8		Paiute Ridge
B1		Lower Pahranagat Lake
B2		Lower Pahranagat Lake NW
B3	oq	Desert Hills NE
B4	oq	Desert Hills NW
B5	oq	Fallout Hills NE
B6	oq	Fallout Hills NW
B7		Papoose Range
B8		Jangle Ridge
C1		Alamo SE
C2		Alamo
C3	oq	Badger Spring
C4	oq	Cutler Reservoir
C5	oq	Groom Range SE
C6	oq	Groom Range SW
C7		Groom Mine
C8		Groom Mine SW
D1		Alamo NE
D2		Ash Springs
D3	oq	Hancock Summit
D4	oq	Crescent Reservoir
D5	oq	Groom Range NE
D6	oq	Groom Range
D7		Cattle Spring
D8		Groom Mine NW
E1		Hiko SE
E2		Hiko
E3	oq	Mt. Irish SE
E4	oq	Crescent Spring
E5	oq	Tempiute Mtn. SE
E6	oq	Tempiute Mtn. South
E7		White Blotch Springs SE
E8	oq	White Blotch Springs
F1		Hiko NE
F2		Fossil Peak
F3	oq	Mail Summit
F4	oq	Mount Irish
F5	oq	Monte Mtn.
F6	oq	Tempiute Mtn. North
F7		White Blotch Springs NE
F8		White Blotch Springs NW
G1		White River Narrows
G2		Seaman Wash
G3	oq	Murphy Gap SE
G4	oq	Murphy Gap
G5	oq	Meeker Peak
G6	oq	Worthington Peak SW
G7	oq	Honest John Well
G8	oq	Black Top
H1		Weepah Spring
H2		Oreana Spring
H3	oq	Coal Valley Reservoir
H4	oq	Murphy Gap NW
H5	oq	Worthington Peak
H6	oq	McCutchen Spring
H7	oq	Quinn Canyon Springs
H8	oq	Quinn Canyon Springs NW

"oq" indicates an orthophotoquad (aerial photo) of this area is available from USGS.

Source: USGS Nevada Catalog.

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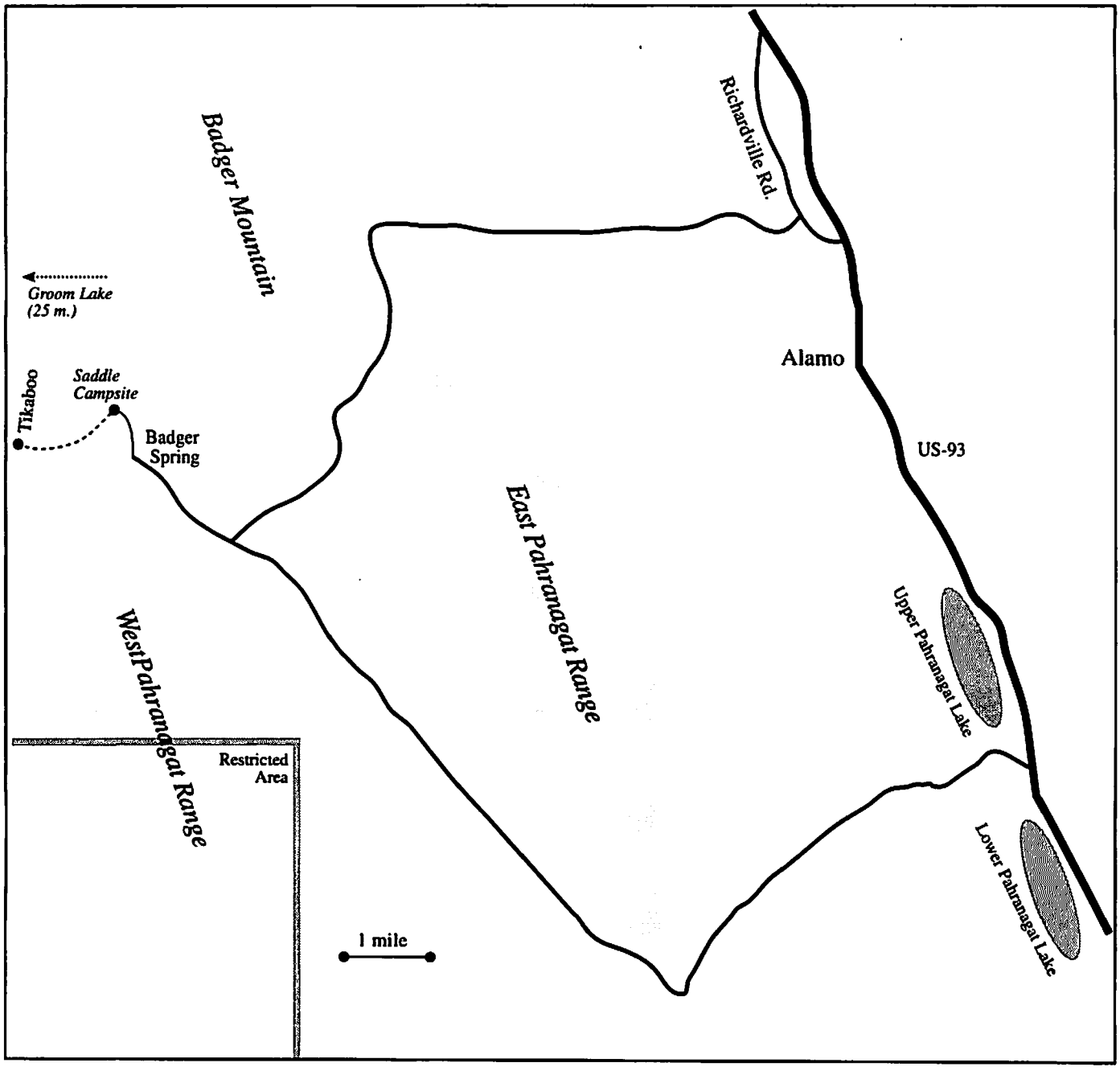
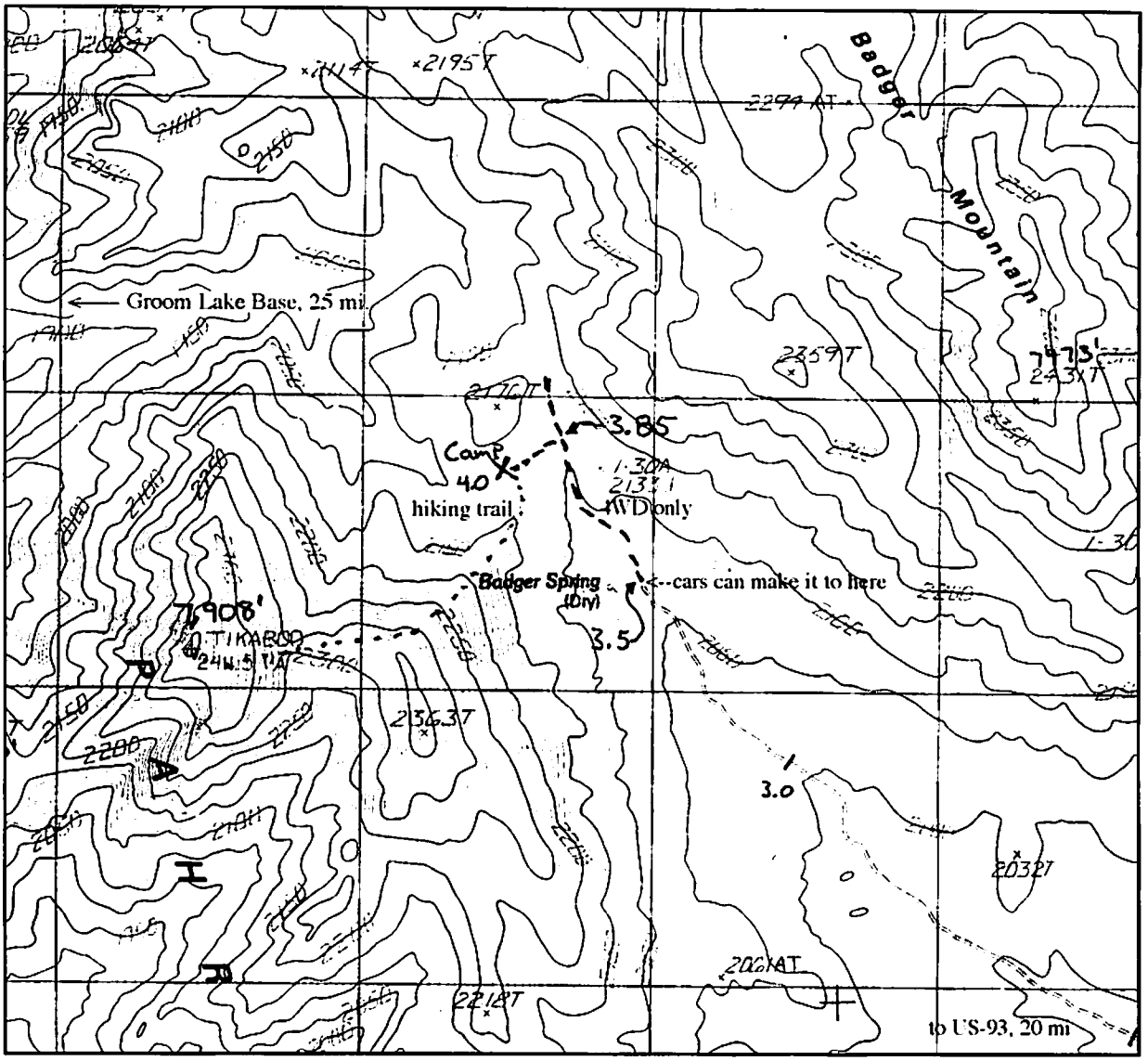
Approaches to Tikaboo Peak



Tikaboo Peak



Badger Spring and Tikaboo Peak. From USGS Badger Spring 7-1/2 Minute. 2-1/2"=1 mi.

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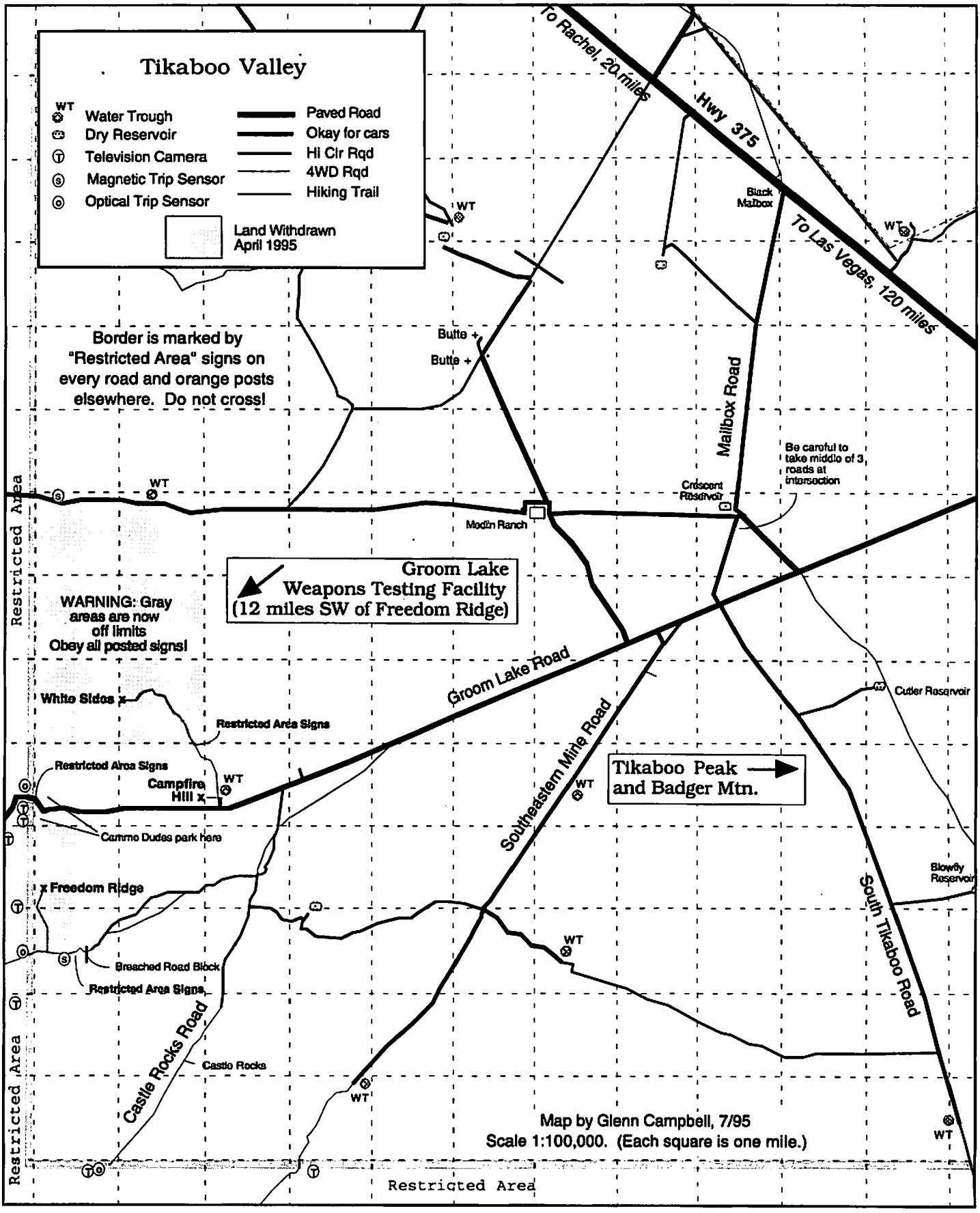
Tikaboo Valley
WT Water Trough
Dry Reservoir
Television Camera
Magnetic Trip Sensor
Optical Trip Sensor
Paved Road
Okay for cars
Hi Clr Rqd
4WD Rqd
Hiking Trail
Land Withdrawn April 1995
To Rachel, 20 miles
Hwy 375
To Las Vegas, 120 miles
Black Mailbox
Mailbox Road
Be careful to take middle of 3 roads at intersection
Crescent Reservoir
Modin Ranch
Butte
Butte
Border is marked by "Restricted Area" signs on every road and orange posts elsewhere. Do not cross!
Restricted Area
WARNING: Gray areas are now off limits Obey all posted signs!
Groom Lake Weapons Testing Facility (12 miles SW of Freedom Ridge)
Groom Lake Road
White Sides
Restricted Area Signs
Restricted Area Signs
Campfire Hill
Cammo Dudes park here
Freedom Ridge
Breached Road Block
Restricted Area Signs
Castle Rocks Road
Castle Rocks
Southeastern Mine Road
Tikaboo Peak and Badger Mtn.
Cutler Reservoir
Blowdy Reservoir
South Tikaboo Road
Map by Glenn Campbell, 7/95
Scale 1:100,000. (Each square is one mile.)
Restricted Area

About The Author

Glenn Campbell is a covert government agent paid by a secret intelligence agency to spread disinformation about Area 51... according to the UFO true believers at the Little A'Le'Inn. They say there were plenty of UFOs seen along Highway 375 until Campbell came to "investigate" them. In his *Area 51 Viewer's Guide*, he explained away most of the lights in the sky, so witnesses now doubt their sanity and are afraid to report UFOs when they appear. Campbell spreads ridicule and innuendo freely in his newsletter, *The Groom Lake Desert Rat*. Conspiracy theorists cannot agree on what his real mission is or who is paying him; the only thing certain is that he cannot be trusted.

Campbell moved to Rachel in Jan. 1993, supposedly from the Boston area. He claims to have been a computer programmer there, but this hasn't been proven. He says he was born in Boston in 1959, but he does not seem to have a Boston accent, and he has not made his birth certificate public. Why won't he come clean? Campbell says he attended several colleges but did not graduate and that his computer and writing skills were entirely self-taught—a convenient explanation for his lack of academic records.

Campbell claims to be living off his savings accumulated as a programmer and the income of his mail-order business, but these sources alone could not possibly be supporting his lavish lifestyle. He has not one residence but two: a mobile home in Rachel and an apartment Las Vegas. He recently bought a new Toyota 4Runner, probably funded by his government pay-offs. He has also been seen on shopping binges at Las Vegas Wal-Marts in which price is no object.

Campbell has always been a problem for the local authorities. He has had many encounters with sheriff's deputies near the military border and was arrested once on a charge of Obstructing a Public Officer during the seizure of a TV news crew's video tape. Campbell is well connected to the press, having been featured in stories about Groom Lake on *ABC World News Tonight*, *Larry King Live*, *The New York Times Magazine* and other government-controlled mouthpieces. There seems little doubt that Campbell is entangled in the same web of secret alliances that control our media, industry and world leadership.

Campbell lived full-time in Rachel for over two years, keeping an eye on the local UFO scene for his government handlers. For the first seven months he lived in a tiny motorhome behind the Little A'Le'Inn until the proprietors discovered who he really was and threw him out. Campbell then started the "Area 51 Research Center" in a mobile home at the other end of town. It may sound like a prestigious organization, but it really consists of just Campbell and a part-time assistant. Campbell erected many antennas and a ten-foot satellite dish outside his "Research Center." It is rumored that he can tap into any telephone in Rachel and communicate directly with the Pentagon through a satellite uplink.

Campbell now spends most of his time in Las Vegas. His apartment there happens to overlook a special air terminal at the Las Vegas airport where unmarked jets ferry workers to Groom Lake. This location would make it easy for Campbell to consult with his bosses or even go to Area 51 himself for secret consultations with the powers-that-be. Campbell claims to be interested in UFOs and the theory that alien spacecraft have been housed in Nevada's military zone, but all he is really doing is muddying the waters. He is a debunker and grandstander with little interest in the truth. It is recommended that you not buy his book or read his newsletter.

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Mt. Stirling/Papoose Viewpoint

Version 2.0, March 1995

by Tom Mahood

Among a great many of the tormented souls haunting the perimeters of Area 51 there is a dream. It's a seemingly simple, innocuous dream: To be able to view Papoose Lake and the goings on there (If you have to ask "What's Papoose Lake", well...you don't need to see it!). Perhaps not surprisingly, this is very difficult. Papoose is well hidden amongst the mysterious mountain ranges of Dreamland, its secrets shielded from prying civilian eyes.

That is, until now...

A location has been discovered on public land (National Forest, actually) south of the Nevada Test Site that provides a clear line of sight right up the center of Papoose Dry Lake, to the very base of the Papoose Range on the northeast edges of the lake bed. Secret saucer hangars, anyone?? As a special added bonus, you have a fine view of most of the Nevada Test Site and all of the nuclear happenings there.

Special Considerations. You need a 4wd for this trip. The dirt road seems pretty good at first, but steadily deteriorates the further you get from the pavement. At 9.2 miles, the right wheel track becomes a major ravine, stopping all but the most crazed (i.e., stupid!) 4 wheelers. A small wheelbase Jeep C-J type vehicle might be able to get beyond this point and cut out some hiking, but it's very risky.

You'll be looking through 46 miles of atmosphere, normally not much of a

roblem in the clear desert air. However if it's a hazy day, you'll just be wasting your time. Also, bring the best optics you can. Binoculars do a fair job, but magnifications in the range of 15 to 30 power are more useful. If you use a higher power spotting scope, consider a tripod to cut down the shakes you will undoubtedly experience upon seeing the legendary Papoose Lake!

If you want detailed maps of the area, the most useful is probably the 7 1/2 minute USGS Mt. Stirling quadrangle. For a larger scale perspective, the 1:100,000 USGS Las Vegas and Indian Springs maps are helpful.

LATE FLASH: After this was initially written in the spring of 1994 and put in limited circulation, mysterious shiny new locks and chains without any evidence of ownership appeared on the access points for several miles alongthe west side of Hwy 95 on each side of the access mentioned here. These were all locked. A lock and chain was placed at the access described here, but not locked. A subsequent visit found it to be gone. Whether the original owner removed it or an annoyed public land user just tossed it is unknown.

The land on the westerly side of Hwy 95 is all BLM land (i.e., public!!) up to the base of the mountains, where it becomes US National Forest. It is notknown whether the locks have been placed with the sanction of the BLM. Seeing as how this is the main access to the Mount Stirling Wilderness Study Area within the national forest, it seems unlikely.

Although visits since the lock eruption have always found the gate unlocked,be prepared for the contingency that the gate is locked. This could mean something "interesting" is going on. It also could mean that some jerk just felt like locking the gate. Personally, I have found a good set of bolt cutters remarkably inexpensive and a useful traveling tool....

If the access described here is found chained and locked, there are (or at least were) access points off Hwy 95 several miles south. It would be

ossible to enter 5 or even 10 miles south, and connect with the powerline road that parallels Hwy 95 and take it north until the normal Mt. Stirling dirt road is reached at Mile 0.8.

Getting There. Mt. Stirling itself is roughly 48 miles directly northwest of Las Vegas. Access is from a dirt road that intersects Hwy 95 at milepost CL 131.1, approximately 55 miles north of I-15.

If you're heading north from Las Vegas, you'll reach this milepost about 11 miles after passing the Indian Springs Auxiliary Airfield. Be observant, it's easy to miss. The median has a paved drive-across here to allow left turns onto the dirt road.

If you're coming from the north, you'll reach the intersection with the dirt road on the right about 8 miles after passing the Mercury turnoff and 1 mile after passing the Nye/Clark County line.

Start up the dirt road running off to the southwest using the following as a guide:

Mileage	*Comments*
0.00	Hwy 95, Milepost CL 131.1
0.02	Pass through barbed wire gate, close it behind you. NOTE: The barbed wire gate has now been replaced by a chain link gate. (Easier to lock??)
0.8	Intersection with powerline and its service road. Continue straight.
5.15	Toiyabe National Forest boundary and sign.
5.3	4wd trace intersects on left. Continue straight.
5.9	4wd intersects on left. Continue straight.
6.0	Road forks at a "Prevent Forest Fires" sign. Keep right.
6.85	4wd trace intersects on left. Continue straight.
7.0	4wd trace intersects on right. Continue straight.
7.15	Road forks. Keep left.
7.8	Road splits, but comes back together in .1 miles. Either way, take your pick.
8.0	4wd intersects on right. Continue straight.
8.45	4wd intersects on right. Continue straight.
8.6	4wd intersects on right. Continue straight.
9.0	4wd intersects on right. Continue straight.
9.2	Road goes to hell. Parking available on right side of road. Elevation here is about 1880 meters (6166').

The Hike. The object is to reach an elevation of at least 2100 meters (6888'). This is the elevation at which Papoose Lake becomes visible. While there are a number of ways this can be accomplished from this location, the following seems the easiest. Feel free to improvise, however.

Continue walking up the deteriorated 4wd path heading up into the canyon. After about 0.4 miles you'll see another 4wd path coming in from the right. Turn right onto this path and start climbing. After another 0.75 miles on this path, you'll reach a high point, an old mining site, beyond which the 4wd path drops down and ends. Stop at the high point and have a look around.

At this location you've reached an elevation of about 2100 meters (6888') and Papoose Lake is just barely visible. If you're satisfied with this, you need not go further, however better views require more elevation. The simplest, although strenuous, way is to start scrambling up the spine of the ridge immediately behind (south). After a bit (Hah, a good, solid hour is more like it!) of climbing, you'll reach a rounded summit at an elevation of 2427 meters (7960'). This is the first possible campsite (i.e., flat spot) after leaving the high point of the 4wd path. The view here is outstanding.There are a few ledges along the way where it's possible to throw a sleeping bag and have a scenic night. Nothing big and flat enough for a tent until you get near the top. A nice compromise is to set up camp at the 2100 meter spot and simply hike up the slope for 10 or 15 minutes with the optics of your choice.

For those desiring the ultimate, you can continue southeast another 0.75 miles along the crest to Mt. Stirling itself at an elevation of 2505 meters (8216').

To locate Papoose Dry Lake, it helps to first find Bald Mountain. To orient yourself (What? You didn't bring a compass??) look toward Hwy 95 and remember it runs approximately east/west here. Next look off into the distance, about due north. You should be able to see a pronounced peak that has a conical shape, but with a wide base. This is Bald Mountain. Just below Bald Mountain, the hills blocking the view of its base are the Papoose Range. Further dropping your gaze, the lake bed visible at the base of the Papoose Range is (Drum roll please...) Papoose Dry Lake. If there are saucer hangars built into the side of the Papoose Range, you're looking right into where they have been claimed to be. Personally speaking, I hope you have more luck than me in seeing anything.

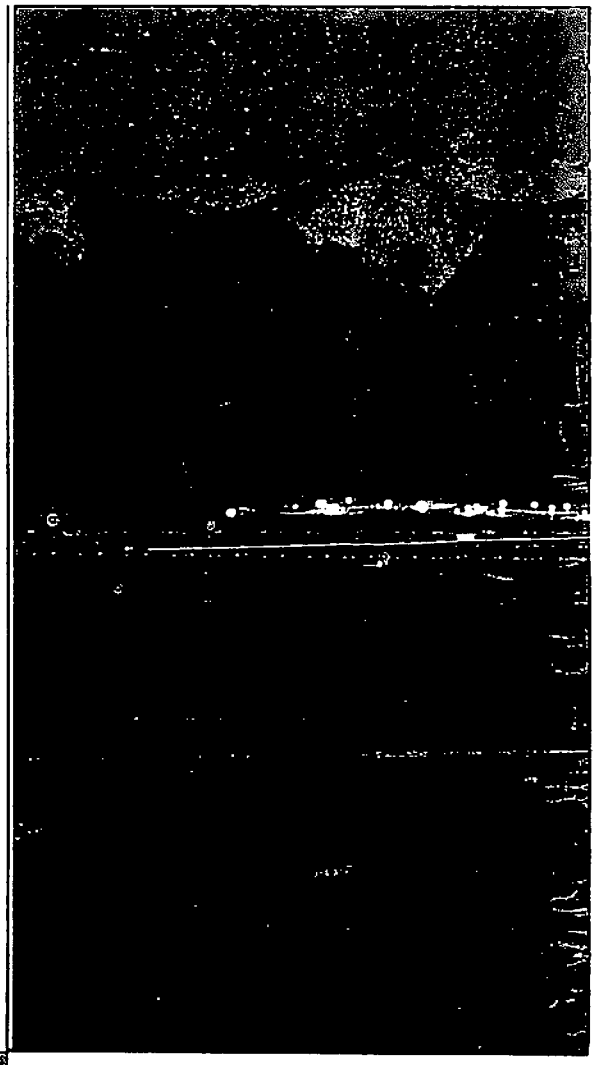
For more precise locating, the following is a listing of the magnetic bearings to a number of selected locations from the vicinity of the high point on the 4wd path:

Magnetic Bearing	*Distance (Miles)*	*Site*
331°	52	Rainier Mesa, site of many underground nuclear tests in tunnels.
338°	13.5	Mercury, the "company town" of the Nevada Test Site, where most support comes from.
338°	20.5	CP-1, the large collection of buildings located in the saddle of the ridge dividing Yucca and Frenchman Flats, is the control center for operations at NTS.
341°	34	Yucca Dry Lake. Just beyond the lake, if the air is very clear, numerous craters from the underground tests are visible.
348°	50	Groom Pass, where Mercury Highway crosses from the NTS to Groom Lake.
351°	23	Frenchman Dry Lake. Site of numerous airburst tests during the testing program. This site is visible only at the higher elevations of Mt. Stirling.
356°	46	Papoose Dry Lake. A good view right up the center of the lake to the base of the Papoose Range. This is why you're here, eh?
357°	69	Bald Mountain. An easily recognized landmark just north of Groom Lake, and from this viewpoint, immediately above the Papoose Range and Papoose Dry Lake.
16°	71	Badger and Tikaboo Peaks. In spite of the distance, they are usually visible due to the clarity of the air. They're on the east side of Tickaboo Valley, just north of the Black Mailbox. You're lookin' a looong way here.
49°	18	Indian Springs Auxiliary Airfield.

The New York Times Magazine

June 26, 1994 / Section 6

'AREA 51'



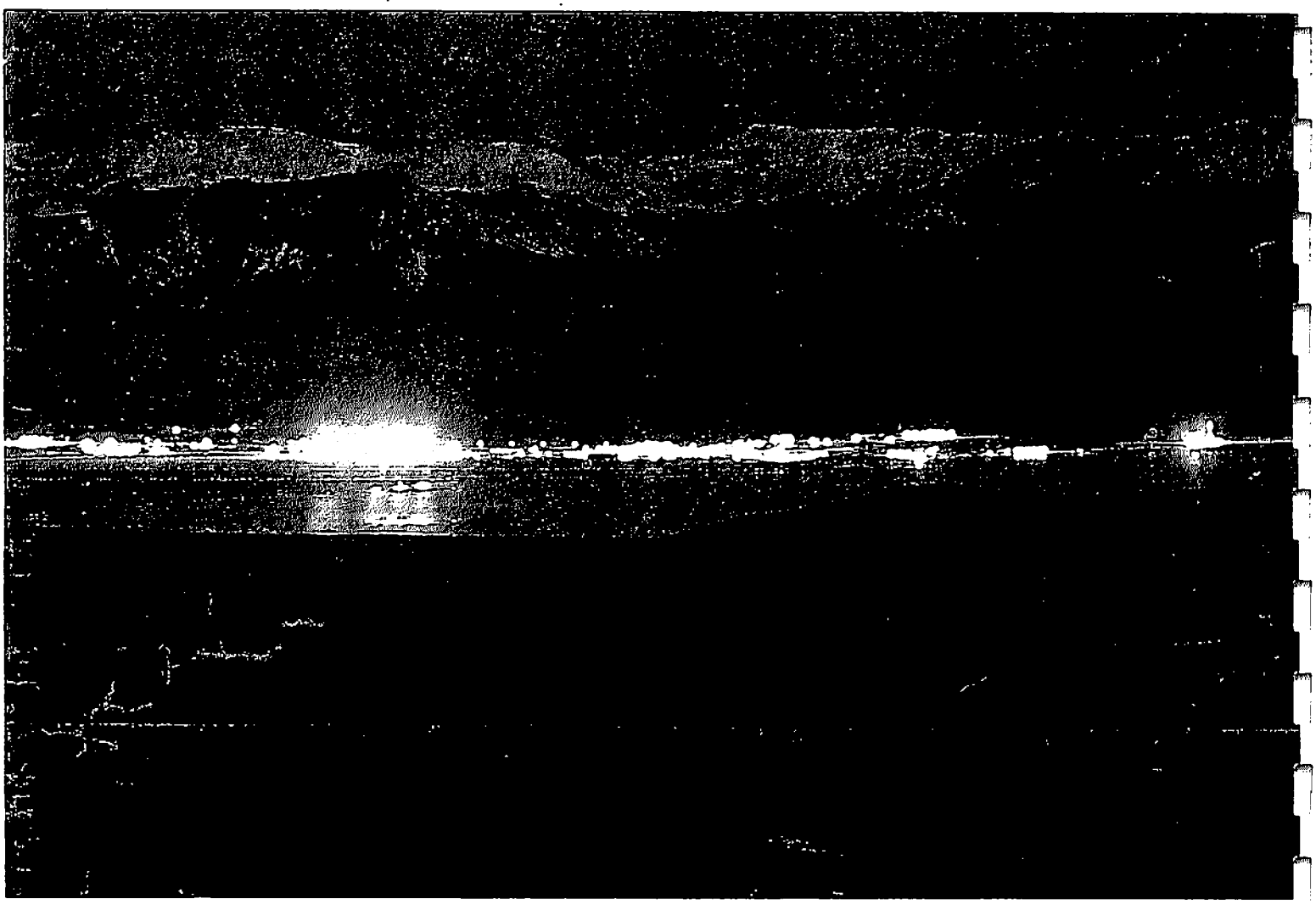
The cold war still rages in the Nevada desert, site of an air base so secret it doesn't exist.

BY DONOVAN WEBSTER

GLENN CAMPBELL IS STANDING ATOP a long ridge in the deepest Nevada outback. It's shortly after sunrise on a midspring morning, and in the valley ahead of Campbell — 12 miles downhill to the west — is one of the last great riddles of cold-war America. Along the valley floor, arranged across the pale, alkaline silt of a dry lake bed, sits a test facility so secret the United States Government won't even admit its existence.

"There it is — the base that doesn't exist," Campbell says, pointing at the boxy buildings and runways in the distance. Campbell, a balding 35-year-old dressed in desert-colored military fatigues, tilts his camouflage-blotchy cap back on his head. He lifts a pair of binoculars and stares. "Yep," he says, lowering the field glasses and smiling, "it's the same top-secret air base that was there last week."

Donovan Webster recently wrote about the global land mine crisis for the Magazine. His book, "Aftermath: Cleaning Up a Century of World War," will be published next year by Pantheon.



Even from a dozen miles off — as close as civilians can get before entering restricted land and being arrested — the facility below us is as Campbell describes. Nestled between steep mountains and inside the recesses of the off-limits Nevada Test Site, 90 miles due north of Las Vegas, dozens of airplane hangars are easily visible, as are satellite-dish gardens, control towers and a handful of 737's. The airfield below us, Campbell says, is among the largest in the United States. Because of its secret "black budget" status, it doesn't appear on any Federal budget allotments. Nor does it appear on Federal Aviation Administration or United States Geological Survey maps. "Doesn't have an official name, either," Campbell adds.

A computer programmer by trade, Campbell in 1992 sold his shares in the Boston-based software company he worked for; he'd heard of the roiling mystery surrounding the air base and, with time on his hands, came out to see it for himself. By January 1993, Campbell had relocated to the nearest town, Rachel (20 miles away, one gas station, a bar-restaurant, no post office), eventually setting up shop in a $215-a-month trailer and calling himself

Glenn Campbell, left, moved to Nevada to see for himself what the Air Force says isn't there.
Above: What isn't there, the base at Area 51.
Top left: A patch Campbell distributes.

the Secrecy Oversight Council. Since that time, he has translated a dogged, computer hacker esprit into 18 months of exploring base perimeters and pioneering two mountaintop vantages on safe Bureau of Land Management holdings. He also writes and publishes a newsletter, The Groom Lake Desert Rat (named for the dry lake bed the base abuts), with a circulation of 900 and a cheekily informative $15 Baedeker called the "Area 51 Viewer's Guide" (Area 51 is the numbered square the base inhabits on old gridded Nevada test site maps) that helps steer the curious clear of arrests.

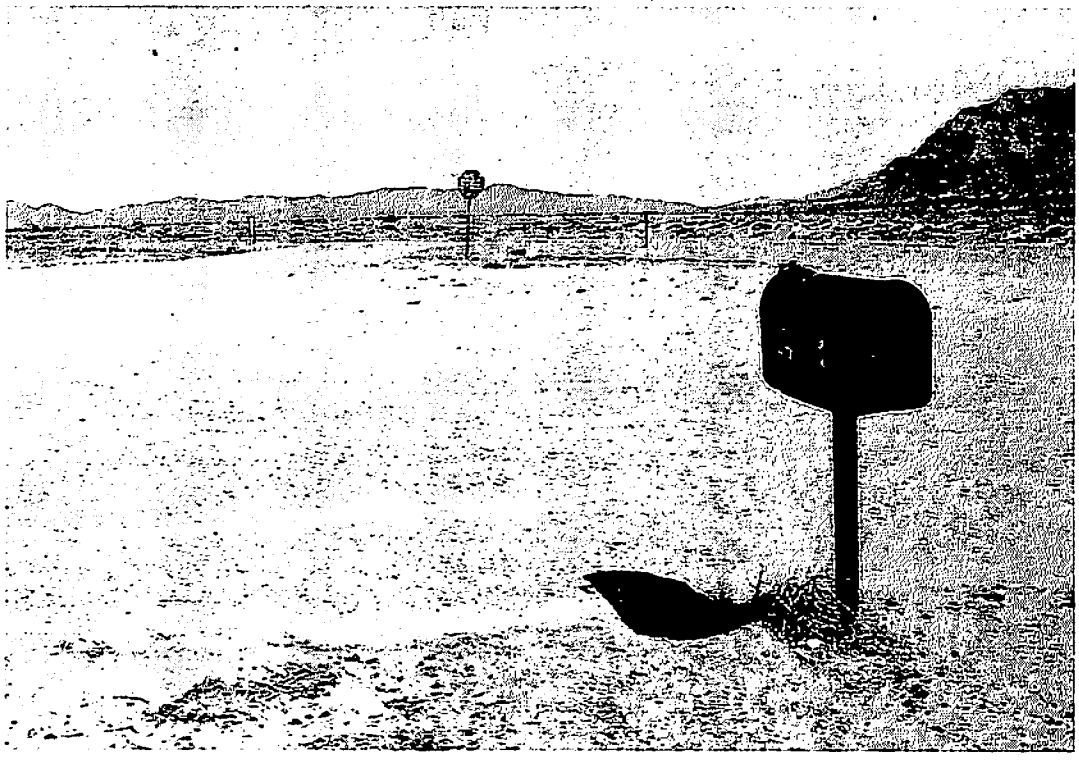
Campbell lifts his binoculars again. He scans the rills between our lookout — a mountain he's named Freedom Ridge — and the distant airfield. In the intervening desert is a line of orange posts, some topped with stainless-steel orbs the size of basketballs. Several closed-circuit TV cameras have been positioned as sentries. At those places, and at other key locations around the desert, are large, unambiguous "Restricted Area" signs, signs that also advise, "Use of deadly force authorized."

"Ah," Campbell says, pointing, "they've arrived. The Cammo Dudes are here."

Mark Richards, a photographer, and I follow Campbell's gesture. Along the perimeter below us, two white Jeep Cherokees with Government plates have materialized from the desert emptiness. They sit just inside the gravel-road gateway to the base, their engines idling in the growing daylight. Inside the Jeeps are heavily armed, camouflage-clad (hence the "Cammo") security agents who were tipped to our arrival by the automobile sensors that litter all the public roadsides leading to this mountain.

"What's this," Campbell says. "There's another fellow — over there, driving a different kind of vehicle." He points to a low mountain just north of Freedom Ridge. A white pickup truck is parked on the knoll's top.

Richards, using a telescope, fixes on the truck. "Hey," he says, "they're filming us. They're got a big telephoto TV camera. They're filming



Steve Medlin's black mailbox, where locals gathered to gawk at strange lights and listen to strange noises.

'Let's ditch the car,' Campbell says. 'It makes 'em really nervous when they don't know where we are. Let's see if they won't come find us.'

us!" Campbell commandeers the telescope. "That's new, that's *new*," he says, obviously pleased. He hands the telescope around: the hilltop TV camera is the kind usually seen at stadium-size sporting events. It's being operated by a man wearing a camouflage uniform and a green insulated jacket. Campbell suggests we wave a greeting to the cameraman, then adds: "They're probably filming us to establish probable cause, in case they want to search us on the way out. I love it. This is a *wonderful development*!"

IT IS PERHAPS THE MOST SECRET MILITARY INstallation in American history. And, in addition to Area 51 and Groom Lake, it has, over its 40-year history, acquired a slew of other, less-formal nicknames: Dreamland (for the strange aircraft developed there), the Ranch, the Box (for its restricted airspace) and Watertown Strip, to name just a few.

Since Air Force and Pentagon officials — including Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall and Gen. Walter S. Hogle, the Air Force director of public affairs — continue to flatly deny its existence, "facts" are hard to come by. According to Campbell and what scant few pieces of information the Pentagon will impart, the area began life as a secret base in 1954, when Lockheed arrived there to develop the U-2, a high-altitude spy plane used for surveillance beyond the Iron Curtain. In later years, the facility — whose runways, hangars and sheds were built by the Department of Energy — has served as a laboratory for such top-secret aircraft as the SR-71 Blackbird spy plane, the B-2 Stealth bomber and the F-117A Stealth fighter. Most recently, it has also been said to house the "Red Hat Squadron," a stable of aircraft purchased from defecting Soviet fliers, and the teardrop-shaped TR-3A Tactical Reconnaissance Plane said to have been secretly employed in the gulf war.

Another rumor widely circulating is that the base has recently been home to an entirely new breed of supersonic spy plane. Dubbed Aurora, the $15 billion plane runs on controlled explosions of cryogenic methane or ammonia, which propel the triangular, matte-black aircraft to between four and eight times the speed of sound. Aurora may have actually left behind two pieces of evidence. The first was a powerful "sonic wake" that some say may have tripped a trail of earthquake sensors beneath its flight path over the Mojave Desert in June 1991; others describe seeing a unique-looking contrail that resembles doughnuts on a rope.

During the base's first 35 years, local ranchers and miners were merely titillated by the vacuumlike secrecy surrounding the place. Sometimes, on slow sagebrush nights, the high-desert locals congregated at Steve Medlin's black-painted mailbox just off Route 375 and watched the blinding, fluttering lights that illuminated the skies above the base, 36 miles to the west. Other nights, they stood by the rancher's mailbox and listened as sonic booms creased the sky from every angle, cracking and echoing chaotically through the canyons. Still other nights, it was said, a silent, whirling dome appeared above the mountains, hovering in one place, then hopscotching around the sky.

Then, in 1989, the simple pleasures of having a secret air base as a neighbor faded when a self-described physicist named Bob Lazar flashed across the Las Vegas TV news. Lazar said he had worked at the base for a few months the previous year, "reverse-engineering" one of the nine captured alien saucers housed there to learn exactly how its extraterrestrial power source worked. Lazar's personal credentials haven't checked out (he claims his educational records, from the California Institute of Technology and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, were destroyed by the Government), but his description of how the saucer worked was enticingly elaborate — as are the Government pay documents Lazar can show for the period he claims to have worked at the air base. Within weeks, tabloid TV had picked up Lazar's allegations, and flying saucer and Government conspiracy buffs from around the world began arriving. Then, when a Soviet satellite photo of the Groom Lake base turned up, legitimate news reporters began arriving as well, turning the hamlet of Rachel, with its 100-some residents, into a unique tourist destination and converting a one-time roadhouse into the Little A'Le'Inn ("Earthlings Welcome"), a bar-restaurant-motel whose five rooms are constantly booked.

Meanwhile, as Campbell continues playing to an ever-increasing audience, his efforts are not lost on the Air Force, which he's placed on his "Desert Rat" mailing list for free. "We read his publication," says Air Force Col. Douglas Kennett, "and we know what Mr. Campbell's doing near a base that may — or may not — exist. While Mr. Campbell says the base is there, and while the Soviets appear to have photographed a base there, the Air Force is also aware of those times when Mr. Campbell or Russian spy satellites might be looking us over — and we can adjust our activities for that. That is, if any activities are going on at a base that may — or may not — exist."

Existent air base or no, the United States Government has decided to end Campbell's desert romps. Last September, and despite all Air Force denials that the place exists, Air Force Secretary Widnall wrote Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt requesting control of nearly 4,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management holdings just outside the base perimeter. Not coincidentally, the property requested by Widnall includes the mountaintop vantages Campbell has designated for his "tours."

AFTER A FEW HOURS ATOP FREEDOM RIDGE, the thrill of watching a top-secret airfield from 12 miles has crumbled into boredom. Campbell has pointed

out some of the specific buildings on the base: the commissary; the bowling alley-movie theater; the employee housing, and the "Scoot-N-Hide Shed," an open-walled roof beneath which secret aircraft can be shuttled in the event of a spy satellite flyover.

For the past few hours, Campbell has been using a police scanner radio to monitor a conversation between the security forces and the local sheriff's department, which has dispatched a patrol car to "meet" us as we leave Freedom Ridge. Over the radio, there is much talk of search warrants, and because of this, Campbell has another plan. "Let's see if we can't draw them out a little," he says. "Let's get lost up here for a while."

We get back in our rented Jeep and head down the ridge toward the valley. Rather than follow the gravel two-track back toward the highway and Rachel, however, Campbell turns off early, down one of the steep draws that falls away from the roadside. "Let's ditch the car," he says. "It makes 'em really nervous when they don't know where we are. Let's see if they won't come find us."

Leaving the car, we stumble down the draw's slope on foot, threading our way into a rocky wash. About a half-mile along, the stone walls draw close together, providing overhang and shade. Here, Campbell says, is where we should wait. In his desert camouflage suit, he sits down and, reaching into bulging pockets, extracts a luncheon only an ex-computer programmer could love: a few cans of Mountain Dew ("twice the sugar and double the caffeine of Pepsi") and a plastic bag of Dutch-style pretzels.

For a while, nothing happens. Then, in the distance, we hear the distinctive whomp-*whomp* of helicopter blades. An olive-drab Blackhawk helicopter passes overhead and we all duck beneath the overhangs as the aircraft moves along the ravine, a few hundred feet above us. "This is great," he says, tucked beneath the granite outcrop as if playing ding-dong-ditch on the Government. "They'll have to come for us on foot." The helicopter, which has Air Force insignia — but no identifying numbers — continues up the gully, finally hovering above our Jeep half a mile beyond us.

After a few fruitless passes, the helicopter heads off, and over the radio we hear the voice of Sgt. Doug Lamoreaux of the Lincoln County Sheriff's Department. He has found our Jeep just off the Freedom Ridge two-track and has parked near it. He's searched the area, he's saying, and has now started tracking our footprints in the sand. To keep ahead of him, we continue working down the wash until it opens up, spilling onto the open desert floor.

As we head across the sagebrush, hoping to circle back to our vehicle, the helicopter returns and drops down until it hovers just above us, its downblast throwing a hurricane of sand into the air and — in violation of the Air Force General Flight Rules — forcing us to lay flat on our stomachs and cover our faces against the sandstorm. There the helicopter hangs, pinning us to the desert, until Sergeant Lamoreaux exits the wash and spots our location.

The game is up.

A restrained alert on the way to Freedom Ridge. At other locations, the signs also advise, "Use of deadly force authorized."

Despite all the cat-and-mouse fun of secret air-base hunting, Area 51's undoing may actually take place in a Federal courtroom in Washington.

STANDING IN THE DESERT WITH SERGEANT LAmoreaux, you get the idea he doesn't enjoy being called upon as law enforcement for Groom Lake. "They've got their own security," he says, "but those guys aren't allowed to make arrests, so they call the Sheriff, and I'm the one who always ends up sweating out here."

As Lamoreaux politely threatens to arrest us unless Richards surrenders his film, you can tell that he's tired of having to chase the curious away from this place. "It seems everyone and their dog has photos of that base," he says after Richards hands over two rolls of film. "So I don't know what they're trying to protect. I've even seen a picture of it that was taken from a Russian spy satellite."

Still, Lamoreaux does his job. Which, in this case, means conducting a field interrogation. He requests that Richards and I produce identification, adding: "I don't need to see your ID, Glenn. We've got your records already." Over the next few minutes, as he takes notes about the day's events, Lamoreaux says that the Lincoln County authorities are growing tired of protecting this place from people who can legally visit it. "The District Attorney is talking to higher-ups about getting the Sheriff's Department out of having to come here," he says. "It's a time- and money-consuming waste."

Due completely to an accident of proximity, Lamoreaux and Lincoln County have been increasingly dragged into Groom Lake's vortex. Each year since 1989, Lincoln County has billed the Air Force about $50,000 for police visits to the land east of Groom Lake. Only a few of Lamoreaux's field interrogations resulted in anything more than paperwork. Most recently, on Jan. 2 of this year, seven Las Vegas residents were detained by base security forces toting automatic rifles after the seven became lost on desert back roads and crossed inside the Groom Lake boundary. "They held us at gunpoint, searched our vehicles and detained us for approximately two hours before the Highway Patrol came," says Connie Ruiz, one of the trespassers. "They never read us our rights."

Today, however, all is friendly. In fact, by the time we return to our vehicles, Lamoreaux has turned into a tour guide, advising us of a naturally occurring hot-spring pool nearby. "That's where I'll be tonight," he says, climbing into his four-wheel-drive Dodge. "After chasing you guys down that canyon, I'm gonna need to soak the soreness out of me."

PARADOXICALLY, DESPITE ALL THE CAT-AND-mouse fun of secret air-base hunting, what may prove Area 51's

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AREA 51

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undoing aren't fantasies of little green men or the activities of people like Campbell. In the next few weeks, in a Washington Federal courtroom, a pair of organizations — the Environmental Crimes Project and the Project on Government Oversight — will file a citizen-action lawsuit against the Air Force, claiming criminal environmental violations and at least one possible death stemming from the illegal burning of toxic and hazardous wastes at the base.

The suit names at least 39 former Area 51 employees who are ready to testify that, thanks to the open-air burning of hazardous and toxic wastes in exposed "burn pits" north of the base, they have sustained long-term damage from dioxins and other hazardous materials. The wastes burned — resins, hardening compounds and solvents called furans (used in the antiradar coating of Stealth aircraft) — are said to cause dioxin-related health problems like liver damage, skin diseases and birth defects. The lawsuit, which will include testimony illuminating daily operations at Area 51, is the first of many steps to gain reparation, a process that may also lift the veil of secrecy that has covered the base all of its life.

One of the plaintiffs, a former air base worker named Sam Paternostro, says: "The bottom line is that it did occur, and I saw it. I don't know exactly what was burned, but I've seen guys from Lockheed dumping all sorts of stuff into those pits. Everybody dumped their wastes in there." Paternostro, who describes the burn pits as open trenches 15 feet deep and 300 feet long, says that, when the pits were ignited, "acrid smoke, with a plastic smell to it" filled the air.

Unlike Paternostro, Helen Frost cannot give firsthand accounts of the burning or the base, since it was her husband, Robert, who worked there and who died in November 1989 of cirrhosis of the liver, a disease she claims he contracted after being exposed to the toxic smoke at the base. According to Frost — and the worker's compensation claim her 56-year-old husband was awarded in October 1988 — one day while working directly downwind of the burns, the skin on her husband's hands and neck turned red and began to peel, a condition known as acute phototoxic dermatitis. While Frost's case has languished in a courtroom before (a wrongful-death lawsuit against Lockheed was dismissed on procedural grounds), she is hoping that, this time, she will prevail. Toting a chemical tissue report filed by Peter Kahn, former member of the New Jersey Agent Orange Commission and a Rutgers University biochemist — which says her husband's tissues showed unusually high levels of dioxins and dibenzofurans — she plans to enter the District of Columbia courtroom with new data and a renewed sense of mission.

Heading up the litigation will be Jonathan Turley, a law professor at George Washington University who also directs the 30-member Environmental Crimes Project. While Turley won't speak specifically until the case begins, he does say this: "We believe we've got at least two convictions here, stemming from the knowing and illegal incineration of toxic and hazardous waste. These are serious charges, and the Air Force can no longer wish them away."

THE SUN HAS RISEN HIGH IN THE sky now, and as Glenn Campbell drives along the roads leading from the secret air base, he says he doesn't know what he'll do when — and if — the Groom Lake facility is finally exposed.

"I really haven't thought that far ahead," he says, adding that one of the kooky aspects he's enjoyed by being America's Area 51 authority is his notoriety within a strange circle of U.F.O. fans. "I've seen them all," Campbell told me the day before our outing. "They all come to my door wanting accreditation. The paranoids, the curious, the conspiracy buffs and people who believe they've been abducted."

One of Campbell's favorite visitors was a man who claimed to be Ambassador Merlyn Merlin II from the planet Draconis. "The Ambassador hung around town for a couple of days," Campbell says. "He came to my door every morning, then he eventually left the area. I try not to be judgmental; I try to keep an open mind."

As the Jeep rolls toward the stop sign at the paved highway's shoulder, Campbell says that, for the short-term, he'll keep overseeing the comings and goings, just to see how the story plays out. "For a long time now," he adds, "Groom Lake has served as the ultimate Rorschach inkblot. Anyone can see anything in the sky at night. If what's happening out there ever is unveiled, a lot of people may be disappointed." ■

LEFT: GLENN CAMPBELL. ABOVE: MARK RICHARDS/DOT, FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES.

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WATERING HOLE IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!

Space aliens hang out at Nevada bar

By JOE BERGER / *Staff writer*

RACHEL, Nev. — The Little A'Le'Inn may not look like much, but the dusty pub in the middle of the Nevada desert is one of the most fascinating places on the planet — because it's the only bar on Earth where space aliens come to wet their whistles!

Local folk who frequent the tiny tavern hardly bat an eye these days when a visitor from some faraway solar system strolls in and plops down at a corner table.

"Some of these spacemen look pretty strange, but some of them look so much like us you'd never know they weren't human if they didn't act so odd," says easygoing Joe Travis, who runs the remote roadhouse with his wife Pat.

"The other day one of 'em came in and sat right over there by the slot machines for 12 hours. The entire time, he never said anything, never ate anything, never drank anything — and never even went to the bathroom.

"Then, when closing time came he just got up, walked out the door and disappeared. We didn't make a nickel off that guy."

But more often, the A'Le'Inn's interplanetary patrons grab a bite to eat and something to drink before zooming off into the sunset. And they pay their tab with crisp green bills.

"I don't know where they get their money, but I'm glad they've got it," Pat Travis says. "There are hardly enough real people around here to keep this place open."

Though Earthlings are scarce, UFO experts say there are more E.T.s strolling around this sleepy hamlet north of Las Vegas than anyplace else on Earth, thanks to a constant stream of starship traffic in and out of nearby Nellis Air Force Base.

Researchers swear the Pentagon is doing more than testing super-sophisticated warplanes at Nellis. They say it's also conducting tests on nine captured alien spaceships stowed in hangars at the base — and meeting on the sly with the occupants of countless UFOs that zip in and out of Nellis every day.

And when the top-secret meetings are over, it seems, the E.T.s often head for the Little A'Le'Inn (pronounced A-Lee-Inn) to unwind.

"You never know when they're going to pop in and you never know what they're going to look like when they do," insists Pat Travis. "But they pretty much keep to themselves, and our regulars just leave them alone. This is a real friendly place."

And the enterprising Travises, who bought the inn six years ago, keep it friendly by making sure their customers feel right at home — no matter what planet they hail from.

"Earthlings Welcome" proclaims a sign outside the front door of the converted trailer. And a few feet away, another sign invites UFO crews to come in and quaff a few.

A wooden replica of a flying saucer sits outside the bar and a papier-mache alien's head is perched atop the jukebox. The restaurant's favorite offering is the Alien Burger — made from unmutilated cattle — and the bar's best-selling drink is a concoction called the Beam Me Up, Scotty.

But despite the frivolous trappings, those aliens snooping around Rachel are no joke to the cowpokes, ranchhands and assorted good ol' boys who belly up to the A'Le'Inn bar every day at dusk.

"A lot of our customers have been abducted by aliens," Pat Travis says. "Around here, nobody kids them about it."

And Pat herself insists an invisible creature from another world has been her constant companion for months.

"Three pyschics have told us that beings we can't see are present in this bar, and one of them is with me all the time," she says. "We call him Archibald and he's been a good friend."

One day recently, the unsuspecting lady was barrelling down Highway 375 when Archibald's voice sounded out loud and clear.

"He told me, 'Pat, slow this car down!' I slowed down from 65 miles an hour to 35 and suddenly there were two big black bulls in the highway right in front of me. If he hadn't warned me, I'd have been killed for sure.

"So around here nobody laughs about space aliens. One of them saved my life."

"EARTHLINGS WELCOME" reads a sign at the only bar on Earth that serves both humans and aliens!

Earthlings Welcome in Tiny Town Where Odd Aircraft Fly Overhead

DUSTY PUB has made headlines around the country for serving aliens.

FULL-SIZE alien photo on barroom door helps visiting E.T.s feel at home.

Savage gangs scalping each other in brutal turf wars

Gang members in Chicago have taken to scalping each other in their brutal turf wars, a police source says.

"We've had 13 cases in the past five months where young men have been killed and then scalped by opposing gang members," said the unidentified source. "These kids are savages."